

The Telegraph



SARTORIAL SAGA

Standout looks at MET Gala 2025 ▶



GENERAL RECALLS

Baffle walls, trenches in war-time Calcutta P4

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HAT-TRICK CHANCE

Knights eye win vs CSK to stay in playoffs race P12



32 PAGES

XXCL

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IN BRIEF

India hits Pak terror bases

■ NEW DELHI: The Indian armed forces launched Operation Sindo early on Wednesday as retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack, hitting terrorist bases in Jammu and Kashmir in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Nine sites were targeted. The defence ministry said the actions were "focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature". No Pakistani military facilities were targeted, the ministry added. India said "considerable restraint" had been demonstrated "in selection of targets and method of execution." Pakistan Army's DG, ISPR, said: "Let me say it unequivocally, Pakistan will respond to this at a time and place of its own choosing. All Pakistan Air Force jets are airborne," the DG said, adding that the strike was from Indian airspace. "Justice is served," the Indian Army said.

Trump tariff claim

■ WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday claimed that India has agreed to remove all American imports to "nothing," asserting that the decision was made solely because of him. India has not officially announced any such decision.

IPL MOMENT

Jasprit Bumrah produced a superb two-over spell during which he took two wickets but it wasn't enough as the Titans pulled off a three-wicket victory against Mumbai Indians on Tuesday. The Titans had everything in their control but Bumrah's two wickets after the rain break upset their momentum. They, however, came back to knock off the 15 needed off the 19th over to reach the DLS target of 147.

Mock drills across country today

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi: Union home secretary Govind Mohan on Tuesday chaired a meeting with several high-ranking officials and reviewed preparations to strengthen civil defence mechanisms a day ahead of the nationwide mock drills amid escalating tensions with Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack.

On Wednesday, the Indian Air Force will also hold "pre-planned, routine" military drills in Rajasthan along the international border with Pakistan. Sources said a Notam, or Notice to Airmen, had been issued for the exercises. On May 7 and 8, scheduled to begin at 9.30pm, the drills will continue for four hours, during which flight operations at airports close to the border would be suspended.

The home ministry had on Monday announced that mock drills — the first since the 1971 war — would be conducted at 24 designated civil defence districts across the country. The development comes at a time India is weighing its options to avenge the Pahalgam massacre and Pakistan has warned of a "swift and noched-up response".

Sources said Mohan convened Tuesday's meeting to assess and coordinate civil defence preparedness with special focus on 100 of the 244 locations that had been identified by the secretary.

Sources said the sensitive sites were located in bordering areas. The meeting was also attended by the chief secretaries of various states.

The drills will focus on how to respond to air raid sirens and blackout sirens. The sources said people would be instructed to keep medical kits with extra supplies, torches and candles at home.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 ▶

WHAT TO EXPECT



Civil defence personnel in Lucknow on Tuesday during a rehearsal for Wednesday's mock drill. (PTI)

The Union home ministry has asked states to conduct civil defence mock drills on Wednesday amid heightened tensions with Pakistan. The exercise will be conducted across the 244 categorised civil defence districts nationwide down to the village level. The drill aims to assess and enhance the readiness of civil defence mechanisms across all states and Union Territories.

Government sources said such a large-scale mock drill would be taking place for the first time since the 1971 Bangladesh war.

What is a civil defence mock drill?

It is an exercise to identify overall strengths, weaknesses and gaps while responding to emergencies like war or aerial strikes or any kind of hostile attack from air, land and sea.

What will happen during the mock drill?

Sources said the drills would be conducted in the designated civil defence districts in conjunction with state and local authorities.

The public may experience brief power outages, blackout simulations, loud sirens, mobile signal disruptions and limited access to certain public spaces. Temporary traffic diversions may also occur in some areas where police and paramilitary troops are likely to stage simulations of war-like scenarios.

The drills will focus on how to respond to air raid sirens and blackout sirens. The sources said people would be instructed to keep medical kits with extra supplies, torches and candles at home.

during the drills.

Objectives of the mock drill according to the ministry

- Assessing the effectiveness of air raid warning sirens
- Operationalising hotline/radio communication links with the air force
- Training of civilians, students and others on the civil defence aspects to protect themselves in the event of a hostile attack
- Provisioning for crash blackout measures and assessing their implementation
- Provisioning for early camouflage of vital plants/installations
- Verifying the activation and response of civil defence services, including warden services, firefighting, rescue operations and department management
- Evaluating the preparedness of evacuation plans and their execution

Compiled by Imran Ahmed Siddiqui

BENGAL SITES

Civil defence districts in Bengal where mock drills will be held on Wednesday, as listed by the defence ministry

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Cooch Behar | 17. Islampur |
| 2. Darjeeling | 18. Dinhatra |
| 3. Jalpaiguri | 19. Mekhliganj |
| 4. Malda | 20. Mathabangha |
| 5. Siliguri | 21. Kalimpong |
| 6. Greater Calcutta | 22. Jalakha |
| 7. Durgapur | 23. Kurseong |
| 8. Haldia | 24. Kolaghat |
| 9. Hashimara | 25. Burdwan |
| 10. Kharagpur | 26. Birbhum |
| 11. Burpur-Asansol | 27. East Midnapore |
| 12. Farakka-Khejurihat | 28. West Midnapore |
| 13. Chittaranjan | 29. Howrah |
| 14. Balurghat | 30. Hooghly |
| 15. Alipurduar | 31. Murshidabad |
| 16. Raiganj | |

The week-long drill, involving multiple departments, is being organised after the Centre directed districts to assess their readiness to handle emergencies.

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Modi: India's waters will flow in India's favour

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



Modi at the ABP Network India at 2047 Summit on Tuesdays. (@narendramodi / YouTube via PTI)

backs against Pakistan after the Pahalgam carnage, he clearly seemed to be referring to it.

"These days, there is a lot of discussion in the media over water," he remarked with a smile, appearing to refer to India's decision to stop sharing river water with Pakistan.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 ▶

'Sensitive' state gears for exigency

PRANESH SARKAR

Calcutta: The government in "sensitive" Bengal will conduct a large-scale emergency preparedness mock drill across 17 districts starting Wednesday.

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MET MAGICIAN: Shah Rukh Khan attends the 2025 Met Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. (Getty Images, courtesy Sabysachi Mukherjee)

SMITA ROY CHOWDHURY AND SANJALI BRAHMA

Shah Rukh Khan's long-awaited debut on the MET Gala steps lived up to every bit of the expectations that had built up ever since the news of the superstar's appearance at global fashion's biggest stage broke.

The participation was even higher since Khan was to be dressed by none other than Calcutta designer Sabysachi Mukherjee, a favourite of Indian stars for their global appearances.

On Monday night (Tuesday morning in India), New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art's lead carpet saw Khan arrive in his signature look — a black ensemble, courtesy of Mukherjee, in a look celebrating heritage and maximalist elegance. A blockbuster moment in the making — equal parts red carpet razzle-dazzle and cultural mic drop.

The theme for this year's MET Gala exhibition was "Superfine: Tailoring Black"

Style" and the dress code was "Tailored For You".

Khan's look was a masterclass in maximalist suave — a floor-length, elongated coat in Tasmanian superfine wool with monogrammed Japanese horn buttons. The hand-canvassed, single-breasted coat featured a peak collar and wide lapels, paired with a crepe de chine silk shirt and tailored superfine wool trousers.

The pièce de résistance? A pleated silk cummerbund and the Bengal Tiger Head Can — an 18k gold work of art adorned with tourmalines, sapphires and diamonds. Custom jewellery from Sabysachi High Jewellery — layered necklaces bearing his initials to a diamond-encrusted "K" (for King Khan) — imbued the look with personal symbolism.

Khan told a fashion magazine during the carpet call: "We have little kids (Subarna, Aryan and AbRam) who are very excited about the MET."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 ▶

Maharashtra poll deadline

R. BALAJI

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has directed the Maharashtra state election commission (SEC) to complete polls to 376 local bodies within four months.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N. Kirtiwar Singh asked the SEC to issue the necessary notification within four weeks, adding that the elections would be based on the reservation policy that existed before the 2022 report submitted by the Election Commission, headed by former chief secretary Jayant Kumar Bantha.

It said the outcome of the elections would be subject to the apex court's decision on pending petitions challenging the commission's report that had recommended 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs.

Following multiple peti-

tions against the 27 per cent OBC quota recommended by the Bantha panel, the apex court held in 2022 restrained the SEC from holding the local body polls until the top court examined the validity of the recommendations.

Since then, elections to gram panchayats, taluka parishad and other local bodies have not been held in the state.

When the matter came up for consideration on Tuesday, the bench said bureaucrats could have moved the relevant key positions in local bodies as it would defeat the very purpose of the constitutional mandate of having democracy at the grassroots level.

Justice Kant, heading the bench, said: "Why can't elections be held as per the earlier position without prejudice to the contention of the petitioners? Today, all bureaucrats

occupying all the municipal corporations and panchayats are taking major policy decisions. Because of all this litigation, the democratic process has been stalled."

Solicitor-general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Maharashtra government, and senior advocate Indira Jaising, representing some of the petitioners, agreed with the court's view that bureaucrats were running the municipalities and elections would facilitate the return of the political leadership.

Jaising pointed out that if the Bantha commission report was accepted, it would result in the denotification of 34,000 posts.

The bench said it was only concerned with the conduct of the polls. It said disputes regarding the inclusion or exclusion of people in or from the list of candidates might not be a major issue as the affected persons could always contest the next polls.

"After all, it is an election for a particular tenure," the bench observed.

FIR query on student suicides

R. BALAJI

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday sought directions from authorities on whether FIRs had been registered in connection with the alleged suicides of students at IIT Kharagpur and NEET Kota.

A bench of Justice J.B. Pardiwala and Justice R. Madhavdeva passed the direction to examine whether its March 24 judgment laying down a law making registration of FIRs mandatory in all suicide or suspicious death cases of students in higher educational institutions had been complied with.

The bench on Tuesday passed the directive while dealing with the compliance of a directive issued by the court with regard to the directive of the bench to the Union government to deposit a sum of ₹20 lakh as an outlay for the initial operations of the national task force constituted by the top court on March 24. It is to be headed by Justice Ravindra Bhat, a former judge of the Supreme Court, and is mandated to identify the causes for such suicides, particularly in high-

er educational institutions like IITs and IIMs.

"We take this opportunity to take notice of two more unfortunate incidents of suicide as reported in the papers that a student aged 22 studying in IIT Kharagpur was found hanging in his room on 4-5-2025... An NEET aspirant committed suicide by hanging herself from an iron grill of her room in Parshavnath ahead of the National Medical Entrants Examination, which was scheduled on Sunday, i.e., 11-5-2025," the court said.

SC judges' assets

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday night had ordered an investigation of assets owned by the Chief Justice of India and 20 other judges, consistent with its efforts to ensure greater transparency.

The apex court has 33 judges. The Supreme Court has also decided to put in the public domain the process relating to the appointment of judges to the apex court and the high courts.

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Former general and 103-year-old look back at city's tryst with wars when windows would be blacked out



Omar Abdullah in Srinagar
On Tuesday.
(@CM_JnK via PTI)

Don't punish Kashmiris: Omar

MUZAFFAR RAINA

Srinagar: Chief minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday warned the security establishment against making Kashmiris feel like they were being subjected to "collective punishment" as he flagged the death of a 24-year-old man in Kulgam and multiple arrests following the Pahalgam terror attack.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti has also urged Lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha to "end the policy of arrests and punitive measures and ensure release of innocents", while claiming that 3,000 people had been arrested in the crackdown that followed the April 22 carnage.

Kashmir erupted in outrage after Imtiyaz Ahmad Magrey's family received a call from a stream on Sunday following his arrest by the security forces last week. While Magrey's family and politicians have alleged foul play, the police have claimed he committed suicide after jumping into the stream while leading them to a militant hideout.

Security forces are also facing accusations of killing the sons of two militants in Bandipora and Kupwara districts and blowing up dozens of houses as part of an anti-terror drive.

"Kulgam should not have happened. There are also reports of arrests in different places. It should not happen with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly Kashmiri who for the first time came out and expressed outrage over any (militant) attack," Omar told reporters.

"People should not feel they are being subjected to collective punishment in order to apprehend the perpetrators of the Pahalgam attack," he added.

Calcutta recall: siren & trenches

KINSUK BASU

Calcutta: Baffle walls were erected outside windows, trenches were dug along roads, motorists were asked to zigzag their way and there would be sudden blackouts.

Between World War II and the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971, Calcutta had been through regular wailing of sirens as part of a war or preparations for one.

Warrior army chief Shankar Roychowdhury recalled that during World War II, air raid precaution (ARP) wardens would go around Calcutta armed with whistles and torches and warn residents to be aware of ongoing air raids and take necessary precautions.

"As a school boy, we would listen to the blowing of whistles and ARP sirens and run to our house in Calcutta," Gen Roychowdhury said. "Some of these wardens also helped build baffle walls, close to windows, to prevent residents from receiving splinter injuries during bombings or bullets during firing."

Some of those who witnessed both and lived through the India-China war of 1962 and the Indo-Pakistani war in 1965, recalled how sirens would go off from different buildings, including the Metropolitan Building in Chowringhee, the ones in Bol Park on College Street and Howrah, mostly at night.

Residents would rush to the ground floor, stay huddled and crouched until an all-clear signal would be given.

"Wailing sirens meant Ihabat would have to go off. We had to take siren drills," recalled Chandra Sekhar Bose, a 103-year-old Salt Lake resident.

"We had our windows covered with long cloth strips, like bandages. During the Liberation War, there would be sudden blackouts. Everyone carried torches. A flood of rounds kept swarming the city. The sirens would go off once in a while. We had to dim our lights. Wartime and sirens were synonymous."

During World War II, separate trenches would be built for the Indians and the British, recalled Gen. Roychowdhury, whose father worked with the



General Shankar Roychowdhury

Imperial Bank in Bradurham. "As a young boy, I never had to enter the trenches. But I remember seeing many people going inside. If required, they would have to be built now in Calcutta," Gen Roychowdhury said.

The country's 18th Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Bipin Rawat, also recalled Calcutta's 1965 air raid, saying it was a "lesson learned".

"At the time, the Security Council discussed rising tensions between India and Pakistan and several events called for de-escalation."

Greece, president of the UNSC for May, had scheduled the meeting on Monday following a request by Pakistan.

Assistant secretary-general

UNSC 'tough questions' for Pak

New York: UN Security Council member nations have posed tough questions to Pakistan while discussing the Pahalgam terror attack amid increasing global outrage over the deadly strike that killed 26 civilians.

The Security Council refused to issue a statement following the meeting, which was held in a consultative room rather than the main hall, effectively dismissing Pakistan's attempt to get a favourable position from the UN organisation.

There was broad condemnation of the terrorist attack and the need to fix accountability for it, authoritative sources told PTI after an informal session of the top UN body.

"The Security Council members raised tough questions for Pakistan at its informal session. It was advised to sort out the issues bilaterally with India," a source said.

At the same time, the Security Council discussed rising tensions between India and Pakistan and several events called for de-escalation.

A Russian diplomat said: "We hope for de-escalation."

Sources said there was broad condemnation of the terrorist attack and recognition of the need for accountability.

Some members specifically brought up targeting of tourists on the basis of their religion, the sources said.

UNSC members refused to



Jammu and Kashmir SDRF personnel conduct a mock drill at the Dal Lake on Tuesday. (PTI)

accept the "false flag" narrative and asked whether the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tiba was likely to be involved.

The sources said Pakistan's efforts to internationalise the situation also failed. Many members expressed concern that Pakistan's missile tests and nuclear rhetoric were causing "friction".

Pakistan's permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, told reporters that the country's objectives were "largely served and achieved" at the meeting.

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UNSC members refused to

PM water hint

► FROM PAGE 1

thought whether the world would like it or not, whether it would fetch votes or not," he said.

"The country cannot move forward like this. The country moves forward when the only criterion for decisions is 'Nation First,'" he added.

Modi claimed that banks were in a precarious situation during the UPA regime, but made a record profit over the last decade on the back of the reforms initiated by his government.

He said India had turned into a manufacturing hub under his government. "We were told that India is not a maker but just a market, but now this tag imposed on India is getting removed. Today, India is becoming the world's biggest defence manufacturer and exporter. India's defence products are being exported to more than 100 countries," he said.

He said India was showing the world that "tradition and technology can thrive together".

"Today we are among the top countries in digital transactions and at the same time we are taking our yoga and ayurveda to the world," the Prime Minister said.

'Absurd' tag on OIC blame

ANITA JOSHUA

agency Andalou Agency. According to the agency report, in a joint statement, the OIC said such accusations risk exacerbating an already volatile situation and iterated its "principled position against, and condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomsoever and wherever".

The report said that the OIC rejected "all attempts to associate our country with religion, culture or nationality with terrorism" and added: "The unresolved dispute remains the core issue affecting peace and security in South Asia. The OIC statement, issued at the behest of Pakistan, is an attempt to refute the accusations of the Pahalgam terrorist attack and its cross-border linkages. This is yet another attempt by Pakistan, a country that has long engaged in cross-border terrorism, to manipulate and misguide the OIC group to issue a self-serving statement. We reject the OIC's intervention in the internal affairs of India, external affairs ministerial spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in response to queries on the OIC's second statement since the Pahalgam attack.

A copy of the OIC statement is not available on its website but was reported by the Turkish state-run news

Rahul unity message at home of navy victim

PHEROZE L VINCENT

New Delhi: Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday met the family of Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, the naval officer who was killed in front of his wife during their honeymoon in Pahalgam.

Rahul visited the family in Karmal with Rohtak MP Deepender Hooda, Haryana Congress chief Uday Bhan, Karnataka MLC B.K. Hariprasad and other party leaders.

For the meeting, Rahul posted on X: "This courage and bravery even in the midst of immense grief is a message for the country — we have to remain united. The whole country stands with the families of the martyrs. The Opposition fully supports the government — the culprits should



be punished in such a way that no one dares to even look at India."

Last week, Rahul had met the Kanpur-based kin of Shubham Dwivedi, who was also killed in Pahalgam.

Narwal's widow Himanshi, who was not home when Rahul visited, became an icon of national grief after she was photographed sitting beside her husband's coffin during a memorial meeting for him on May 1. She spoke out against attacks on Muslims by Right-wing groups using Pahalgam as an excuse. She has faced incessant online trolling since.

Hooda told reporters that the conversation with the bereaved family was private. Of the many in Pahalgam, Rahul and our objective is not to make political remarks."

The National Commission for Women had on Monday issued a cagey condemnation of the trolling. Opposition politicians and civil society have praised Himanshi for her stand after the attack.

A copy of the OIC statement is not available on its website but was reported by the Turkish state-run news

Kharge to PM: Follow Telangana census model

ANITA JOSHUA

New Delhi: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to urge him to follow the recently concluded Telangana caste survey used as the template for the nationwide census announced by the government last week.

In a letter to Mod on Monday, Kharge said: "The design of the census questionnaire is crucial. Caste information has to be collected for formulating policies for achieving socio-economic objectives."

The Telangana survey, which borders Bangladesh, China, Bhutan and Myanmar, is also geared up for Wednesday's mock drill. Assam will hold drills on air raid and war preparations" at 14 civil defence districts from 4pm.

Drills will also be held in all eight Tripura districts, 10 districts of Nagaland and one district of Manipur (Imphal West).

At Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, near the China border, the drill will start at 8am.



Mallikarjun Kharge addresses the Congress's Samvidhan Bachao rally in Ranchi on Tuesday. (PTI)

Union home ministry must draw upon the Telangana model — both the methodology adopted for finalising the questionnaire as well as the final set of questions asked."

He also stressed the need for

transparency. "Nothing in the report published finally should be concealed so that complete socio-economic data of each caste is made available to promote equality, fundamental rights and the socio-economic process can be measured from one census to another."

The Telangana survey, conducted by the Congress government of Revanth Reddy, was designed to draw up the share of the population of different castes, their educational levels, income and economic status, and the power of the social networks of each social group in various walks of life, including politics, government, business, media and judiciary.

TRANSPARENCY. "Nothing in the report published finally should be concealed so that complete socio-economic data of each caste is made available to promote equality, fundamental rights and the socio-economic process can be measured from one census to another."

The Uttarakhand government has sent notices to many alleged encroachers, including Usman, and directed them to respond within three days.

However, Nainital High Court pulled up the state government for failing to implement the Supreme Court's directive that mandated a 15-day notice to the owner or occupier of unauthorised constructions before demolition.

On Tuesday, members of the Hindu organisations once again assembled at Ma Naladevi Temple in the town and later took out a procession in Nainital while chanting

the Hanuman Chalisa. They built barricades at several places and entered into a scuffle with police near the Nagar Palika office, where they sat on a dharma for over an hour.

"The government is delaying action against the land mafia. It has objected to action against shopkeepers and residents who have built their shops and houses on encroached land. The government must survey the land and make public the list of encroachers. No court can prevent the government from taking action against the land mafia if the charges are true," said Mukesh Joshi, a resident.

Mock drills across country today

► FROM PAGE 1

"The focus of the meeting was to enhance emergency preparedness, besides discussing ways to train civilians for emergency scenarios. Key focus areas include public response to air raid sirens, actions during blackouts and the readiness of essential supplies," a home ministry official said.

"We are reviewing preparedness. During the meeting, we identified some loopholes which will be rectified. Delhi, Bengal and Punjab have a large number of active civil defence volunteers who are engaged in civic duties, including traffic and crowd management," he added.

According to him, civilians will be advised to keep medi-

cal kits, torches and candles handy during the mock drill on Wednesday.

Sources said air sirens would be sounded during the mock drill followed by instructions to the public on the appropriate response. The drill will educate citizens on mutual assistance.

Specialised civil defence commissioners of police (DCPs) will be asked to prepare detailed contingency plans. Sources said DCPs had begun holding strategy meetings with senior officers to increase patrolling and tightened security across key locations in Delhi as part of the largest civil defence readiness exercise.

Delhi, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir and Madhya Pradesh will be the first to host the mock drill, followed by others.

Source said the mock drill will continue for a week.

drills, the sirens will be blown for about 5 minutes at 4pm.

In coastal areas, the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority will use its sirens meant for natural disasters.

We advise the public to take shelter under any concrete roof during this period," he added.

The Assam, which borders Bangladesh, China, Bhutan and Myanmar, is also geared up for Wednesday's mock drill. Assam will hold drills on air raid and war preparations" at 14 civil defence districts from 4pm.

Drills will also be held in all eight Tripura districts, 10 districts of Nagaland and one district of Manipur (Imphal West).

At Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, near the China border, the drill will start at 8am.

seamlessly blending motherhood with patriotic norms.

Mukherjee's interpretation of the word "patriot" is farcical, deridingly referred to as a "fairy tale" from Indian history — Jamsetji Tata's refusal to accept exclusion from a British-only hotel in colonial Bombay, and how that led to the creation of the iconic Taj Mahal Palace.

"We celebrate dandysim on the MET Gala red carpet by bringing our own version with a ceremonial sword and Gurmukhi script embroidery. And designer Manish Malhotra, making his own debut on the MET Gala red carpet by bringing the motifs of Mukherjee's reimagining into the global reach of Indian fashion," added the designer.

SRK and Sabayashi's MET moment? Fashion history. It wasn't just an outfit. It was a full-throttle celebration of identity, cinema, craft and charisma. And let's be honest — when Bollywood meets Black dandy meets Bengal bazaar, the result is nothing less than spectacular.

After divisive protest, eye on 'encroachers'

PIYUSH SRIVASTAVA

► FROM PAGE 1

Khan added: "I don't know if I would have come here on my own, but when Sabya suggested it, they went 'wow'. I still don't know if that was 'wow', they called you' or 'wow, you'll be goodon it'."

Talking about his outfit, Khan said: "I told Sabya I only wear black and white, and tonight's look is a bit different from that. What I'm dressed for now is what I'm most comfortable in. That's how I think it should be."

Mukherjee said in an official note issued by his company: "I wanted to represent Shah Rukh Khan as Shah Rukh Khan and nobody else. Shah Rukh Khan is a magician, superstar, and icon. Period."

The Indian couturier, who

made his second consecutive MET Gala appearance — after a head-turning, bewitched debut appearance last year — surprised everyone with his look. The man who's known for his subtle personal style — think white shirts and denims — turned it up several notches and how!

Inspired by the noble houses of India, Mukherjee interpreted the theme with a hand-quilted velvet jacket, a marlboro plume and a jewelled starburst, was the highlight of the look.

The gala theme explored the role of sartorial style in forming Black identities, focusing on the emergence, significance and proliferation of Black dandysim. The exhibit, comprising clothing, photographs, fine art, film clips and music, was the first Costume Institute show since 2003's "Men in Stripes". It drew inspiration from Monica L. Miller's 2009 book, *Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandysim and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity*, offering a rich exploration of how fashion became a powerful form of self-expression and defiance against soci-

alist and racial norms.

Mukherjee's interpretation of the word "patriot" is farcical, deridingly referred to as a "fairy tale" from Indian history — Jamsetji Tata's refusal to accept exclusion from a British-only hotel in colonial Bombay, and how that led to the creation of the iconic Taj Mahal Palace.

"We celebrate dandysim on the MET Gala red carpet by bringing our own version with a ceremonial sword and Gurmukhi script embroidery. And designer Manish Malhotra, making his own debut on the MET Gala red carpet by bringing the motifs of Mukherjee's reimagining into the global reach of Indian fashion," added the designer.

SRK and Sabayashi's MET moment? Fashion history. It wasn't just an outfit. It was a full-throttle celebration of identity, cinema, craft and charisma. And let's be honest — when Bollywood meets Black dandy meets Bengal bazaar, the result is nothing less than spectacular.

croachers were Muslims.

The Uttarakhand government has sent notices to many alleged encroachers, including Usman, and directed them to respond within three days.

However, Nainital High Court pulled up the state government for failing to implement the Supreme Court's directive that mandated a 15-day notice to the owner or occupier of unauthorised constructions before demolition.

On Tuesday, members of the Hindu organisations once again assembled at Ma Naladevi Temple in the town and later took out a procession in Nainital while chanting

Exigency drill

FROM PAGE 1

This is the first such large-scale exercise in Bengal since the 1971 India-Pakistan war, according to officials.

Departments, including fire and emergency services, civil defence and disaster management, health and home, will participate in the coordinated drills at over 30 "strategic points" across the 17 districts.

"The details of the mock drill will be sent to the districts by Tuesday evening. The Centre has identified the categorised districts and the state will now decide on the strategic locations where the exercise will be held. More than 30 strategic locations have been identified for the drill so far," said a senior state official.

During a video conference held by Union home secretary Govind Mohan, the state was brief on the steps required to handle any emergency and also check the coordination between the departments that deal with crisis," said a senior government official, adding that common people would not be involved initially.

Asked what kind of exercise would be conducted during the civil defence mock drill in Bengal, a bureaucrat said everyone would be trained in a building collapse. The drill will also assess how fast the fire tenders are pressed into service during a fire or how quickly the injured are shifted to hospitals during a crisis.

Strems installed in various parts of the state must be kept ready so that people can be alerted during an air strike.

"There are 95 strems in Calcutta and about 20-25 strems in each district. These strems would be checked to ascertain if they are functional. Primary reports suggest that a major-

ity of the strems, mostly in Calcutta, were widely used during World War II when Japanese aircraft dropped bombs in the city. However, they were not used after the 1971 war and are not in working condition," said an official.

He added that in the aftermath of Cyclone Aila's devastation, the state government installed over 300 strems in 2012 in the disaster-prone parts of Bengal.

The official said that Kolkata Police had issued an urgent message across police stations to collect information about the existing strems in their jurisdictions.

A list of strems has to be collated for repair use during the mock drills, a senior officer at the police headquarters said on Tuesday. Sources said the use of strems in the city and district headquarters was discussed at length at the meeting convened by the Union home secretary.

The state was also asked to keep satellite phones ready so that the communication system does not collapse under any circumstances.

"The state has 60-odd satellite phones, which are used during emergencies such as cyclones and other natural calamities, and all are functional," he said.

A senior official said that the existing control room of the disaster management department at Nabanna would act as the main contact point with the air force. The air force will send messages to the control room to alert it in case of a possible air strike, and it would be passed down to similar facilities in the districts.

Through the districts have been shortlisted for the mock drill, senior government officials were surprised to find border districts such as North 24-Parganas, South 24-Parganas and Nadia not included.

"These districts share borders with Bangladesh and have a large population. These districts are very sensitive, given that they are close to Calcutta and the present situation in Bangladesh..." said a senior state official.

Additional reporting by Kousik Basu and Monalisa Chaudhuri

Mamata in Murshidabad damage-control mode, but lapses remain

New subdivision for violence hub

SNEHAMOY CHAKRABORTY AND ALAMGIR HOSSAIN

Calcutta/Samsanganj: Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday announced a new subdivision comprising the Suti, Farakka and Samsanganj blocks of Murshidabad.

She also kept senior party leaders from the area away from the scene of the recent riots that claimed three lives and disrupted their livelihoods of hundreds.

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unhappy with the handling of the situation by both the administration and party.

"Announcing a new subdivision for the violence-hit area confirmed she was unhappy with the failure of the police in managing the riot. Keeping local leaders, including the MLA and MP, away from the meeting with victims clearly showed her dissatisfaction with their performance," said a senior TMC leader in Calcutta.

Mamata, during an administrative meeting in Suti, said a new subdivision would be formed comprising Farakka, Dhulan and Suti. I expect this will be completed within one to one-and-a-half months. The new office will be set up

at a central location for easy access from all districts. You no longer have to travel long distances," Mamata said.

A source said if the new subdivision office is set up in a central location, it will most likely be Dhulan.

A senior police officer stated the announcement indirectly acknowledged police failure. The police have been accused of failing to provide security, especially due to poor planning. Before Mamata's visit, the chief of the Jampur police district, Ananda Roy, was transferred.

A source said during Mamata's meeting with victims, Kalpana Mondal, a

woman from riot-hit Betbona village, requested a permanent BSF camp. Mamata did not respond.

There were accusations that her party leaders failed to prevent the riot despite the area being home to four TMC lawmakers — Jangipur MP Khalilur Rahaman, Samsanganj MLA Amirul Islam, Farakka MLA Manirul Islam and Sagaridighi MLA Babuon Biswas.

MP Rahaman and MLA Amirul Islam were not allowed to take part in her meeting with victims at the Samsanganj BDO office on Tuesday. She also did not interact with local leaders at the helpdesk.

Mamata Banerjee addresses a rally at Suti's KD Vidyalaya in Murshidabad on Tuesday. Picture by Samim Aktar

Didi's plea to people: Don't get provoked



Mamata Banerjee with the daughter of Ejaz Ahmed, who was killed in alleged police firing during last month's riot, at Suti in Murshidabad on Tuesday.

Picture by Samim Aktar

riots... I am against all riots," she added.

"The people do not carry out riots, but outsiders who are brought to the state in a pre-planned way to engineer riots. You get trapped. Do not do so," she said.

Two days before the event, Mamata went with senior administrative officials to Dhulan and met 400 strife-singed families. Her government gave

them multiple forms of assistance. In addition to cheques for ₹1.20 lakh for each of 263 families.

The Trinamool Congress dispensation has been under fire for its alleged failure to avert violence and vandalism in pockets of Murshidabad that affected hundreds of families, claimed at least three lives and injured dozens in April, in the wake of protests against the CAA-NRC-NPR.

"I do not have anything new to say about waaf... do not insist. There is no question of that here. If you must protest, go to Delhi (as it is a central law). There is no problem in Bengal, because I am here. Hindu property, Muslim property, Sikh property, Christian property... I will not have any taken away," she said.

"People have stayed by the Supreme Court and is now sub judice. Do not confuse, if you do, I will be your biggest enemy," she added.

"Did they not try to snatch rights through NRC-NPR? Did we or did we not hit the streets? Let me think it over and make a decision."

The chief minister said she would not stand by an ybody who participated in riots and asked the people to remain as vigilant as the administration on outsiders, to identify the "enemies".

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out riots, but outsiders who are brought to the state in a pre-planned way to engineer riots. You get trapped. Do not do so," she said.

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CM skips key riot-hit areas

SUBHASISH CHAUDHURI AND ALAMGIR HOSSAIN

Calcutta/Samsanganj: Chief minister Mamata Das, Chandan Das and Ejaz Ahmed were kept away from Betbona, which skipped key riot-hit areas during her two-day tour of Murshidabad that ended on Tuesday, prompting shock and disappointment among victims of the April violence.

In Samsanganj, she restricted herself to the BDO office to meet 230 riot-hit families where she distributed cheques for compensation. At Suti, she attended an administrative programme.

Mamata's decision not to visit the riot-ravaged areas sparked an outcry from both Hindu and Muslim victims.

Built Das, a homemaker in Jaffrabad, one of the worst-hit villages, said: "Her visit made no difference to us. She came by helicopter and left the same way."

Built's grievance found an echo in Dhulan resident Golam Malmuddin, shot in the legs while out to buy medicine for his mother. "I'm paralysed

and the CM chose to ignore people like us," he said.

Three persons —

Haranobind Das, Chandan Das and Ejaz Ahmed were kept away from Betbona, which skipped key riot-hit areas during her two-day tour of Murshidabad that ended on Tuesday, prompting shock and disappointment among victims of the April violence.

Administrative sources avoided telling Mamata to Betbona or Jaffrabad for fear of police action, which could trigger the alleged inaction of cops and the suspected role of some TMC leaders in the violence.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari alleged Mamata wasn't kept away by security concerns, but was boycotted by victims, which the administration "realised". "The police tried hard to convince people to attend Mamata's meetings, so that they could hold rallies in Salt Lake during a demonstration by riot victims for his mother. "I'm paralysed

Govt to plant 100 neem trees in Digha

OUR BUREAU

Samsanganj/Bhubaneswar: Chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday said that her administration would plant 100 neem trees on the premises of the Jagannath temple in Digha to ensure there was no encroachment of wood, which is mandatory to carry idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra.

Mamata's statement came in the backdrop of the recent allegation that leftover neem wood from Puri's 12th-century Jagannath Dham had been used to carve the idols placed at the Digha shrine.

"Why will I steal? There is no secret of neem trees in Bengal. There are four trees in every house too. There are 500 trees planted on the Jagannath Dham premises. We will plant 100 more neem trees there," said Mamata as her administrative meeting in Suti, Murshidabad district.

Odisha chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Tuesday told Mamata, requesting the Bengal government to refrain from using the term "Jagannath Dham" for the Digha shrine.

The letter read: "...The name "Jagannath Dham" holds a unique and sacrosanct identity linked to Puri, and its usage in reference to any other temple or location is a violation of the sanctity and emotion of millions of pilgrims, devotees, and the general public, besides diluting the distinct heritage of Shree Jagannath Dham, Puri."

Majhi further said: "In view of this, I request the Government of West Bengal to reconsider the usage of the name "Jagannath Dham" in relation to the Jagannath temple recently established at night in Puri town using the term "Jagannath Dham" in its official naming, communication, and promotional materials."

এনেছিলে সাথে করে মৃত্যুহীন ধ্রাণ,
মরণে তাহাই তুমি করে গেলে দান।

Dr. Rabindra N. Roy

31.07.1939 - 28.02.2025

Founder President

Hem Sheela Model School
Durgapur (West Bengal)



Chairman of Chemistry Department at Drury University, Springfield, Missouri, USA

A pioneer in Undergraduate Research, Recipient of National Research Award 1998 by American Chemical Society

Inaugural Inductee into the College of Natural & Mathematical Sciences - HALL OF FAME at Drury University, USA

A visionary leader, a pioneer in education, a guiding light, a devoted architect of the values, a philanthropist under whose guidance Hem Sheela Model School blossomed into a place of excellence, universality and integrity. His legacy lives in every classroom, in the hearts of countless admirers and well-wishers - an unmatched soul of unique excellence.

In Reverence

Trustees, Management, Teachers, Staff & Students of Hem Sheela Model School and Protima Child & Woman Development Centre, Khatguria, along with entire Hem Sheela Family

Celebration of Life

on

10th May 2025

From 5:30 pm

in the School Auditorium



CURRENCIES	
US \$	₹84.43
UK Pound	₹112.44
Euro	₹95.51

INDICES

BSE	Sensex	Open 80641.07	High 80981.58	Low 80481.03	Close 80641.07	9.15 am	4.00 pm
Sensex	80641.07	-155.77					
Midcap	42391.76	-935.04					
Smallcap	46834.91	-1114.87					
NIFTY	24379.60	-81.55					
Next 50	63824.90	-2.42					
Nifty 50	21956.60	-238.55					

Most active on NSE

Script	Price*	Traded values
Reliance	1417	1998.55
CoForge	7400	1767.47
M&M	3058	1760.21
HDFC Bank	1928	1688.44
Airtel	1896	1633.19

*In ₹, #in crs

COMMODITIES

Gold (10 gram in ₹)	Pure	97500	+3100
Hallmark	93100	+3100	
Silver (kg in ₹)	Bar	96300	+2050
Portion	96450	+2050	
Crude*	5020	+9	
Copper#	851	-0.05	

*per barrel in ₹; #per kg in ₹

MONEY MARKET

Yield (%)	
Call rate	4.95-6.00
91-day T-Bill	6.02
1-year Gilt	6.04
5-year Gilt	6.17
10-year Gilt	6.44

IN BRIEF

Services sector activity up

■ NEW DELHI: India's service sector activity accelerated slightly in April, largely driven by a quicker increase in new order inflows, which also underpinned a faster expansion in employment, a monthly survey said on Tuesday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index reached 58.7 in April, up from 58.5 in March, indicating a sharp and stronger expansion in service sector output. The headline figure was above its long-run average of 54.2. PTI

BoB numbers

■ NEW DELHI: Shares of Bank of Baroda (BoB) on Tuesday tumbled nearly 11 per cent after the company's March quarter earnings failed to cheer investors. State-owned Bank of Baroda on Tuesday reported a 1.5 per cent rise in net profit at ₹5,404 crore in the March quarter of FY25. The lender had earned a net profit of ₹4,886 crore in the year-ago period. PTI

Moody's on growth

■ NEW DELHI: Moody's Ratings on Tuesday cut India's GDP growth projections for 2025 to 6.3 per cent, saying economies globally will see a slowdown on account of heightened US policy uncertainty and trade restrictions. PTI

The Telegraph

BUSINESS

CALCUTTA WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2025

IHCL has liquidity of ₹3000cr which will not only help us tackle headwinds but also give us an advantage for any consolidation opportunities

Puneet Chhatwal,
MD and CEO, IHCL



XXCE

Industry chiefs rejoice

OUR BUREAU

Calcutta: Business leaders and industry groups across the India-UK corridor welcomed the Free Trade Agreement which is expected to facilitate trade, boost jobs and growth for both economies.

Lord Karan Bilimoria, chair of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), said he was "very optimistic" that the deal has been done because it will be a catalyst to turbo-charge investments, doubling trade to over 80 billion pounds within five years.



Jonathan Reynolds with Piyush Goyal during trade talks in London. Reuters

"This is the biggest and most important pact that the UK has signed since Brexit. India is the fastest growing major economy in the world, and a fourth largest economy in the world and yet it is only Britain's 11th largest partner," said Bilimoria.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) described the FTA as a "transformative accord". "Guided by the 2030 Roadmap, the timely agreement will help advance a comprehensive strategic partnership between India and the UK, and bilateral trade towards the ambitious target of \$100 billion by 2030," said CII president Sanjiv Punj.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) hailed the opening up of "massive export opportunities for labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, marine products, leather, footwear, sports goods and toys and gems and jewellery."

"This landmark FTA is poised to significantly accelerate our export growth, with projections indicating a rise to \$2.5 billion within the next two years. As a result, total bilateral trade in gems and jewellery is expected to double, reaching \$7 billion," said Kiran Bansali, chairman of the Gems Jewellery Export Council.

Mark Kent, chief executive of Scotch Whisky Association, welcomed the "transformational" deal: "This is a once in a generation deal and a landmark moment for Scotch Whisky exports to the world's largest whisky market."

"The reduction of the 150 per cent tariff on Scotch Whisky will be transformational for the industry, and has the potential to triple Scotch Whisky exports to India by £1bn over the next 5 years, creating 1,200 jobs across the UK."

India clinches trade pact with UK

OUR BUREAU

Calcutta: India has reached a long-awaited deal with the UK on Tuesday after tariff tussle sparked by US President Donald Trump forced the two sides to hasten efforts to increase their trade in whisky, cars and food.

Scotch whisky and gin may see the price of their coveted brands falling significantly as soon as next week, with tariffs on 150 per cent to 75 per cent before reducing to 40 per cent by the deal's 10th year. Automotive tariffs will also go from over 100 per cent to 10 per cent under a quota.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the development as "landmark" and "mutually beneficial".

"In a historic milestone, India and the UK have fully concluded an ambitious and mutually beneficial free trade agreement, along with a double convention agreement," adding that it would catalyse trade, investment, growth, job creation and innovation.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said, "Today we have agreed on a landmark deal with India — one of the fastest growing economies in the world, which will grow the

BID TO UP VOLUMES BY ₹25.5BN

FOR UK EXPORTERS

■ India to slash levies on 90% of British products, from whisky and medical devices to machinery and lamb, with 85% of those becoming tariff-free within a decade.

■ Whisky and gin tariffs will be halved from 150% to 75%, before falling to 40% by the 10th year of the deal

■ India will also cut automotive tariffs to 10% from over 100% at present

■ Lower tariffs for cosmetics, aerospace, lamb, medical de-

vices, salmon, electrical machinery, soft drinks, chocolate and biscuits.

FOR INDIAN EXPORTERS

■ 99% of Indian exports to benefit from zero duty access to the UK market

■ Labour intensive sectors such as textile, marine products, leather, footwear, sports goods and toys and gems and jewellery to benefit

economy and deliver for Britain's people and business."

The two leaders had a phone call where Modi invited Starmer to India. The FTA will now go through the process of legal text formalisation to be

approved by the British Parliament before it comes into force.

The deal will allow more British firms to compete for contracts in India, and enable Indian workers to travel to Britain for work, without

changing Britain's points-based immigration system.

According to the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, besides whisky and gin, tariff reductions have also been achieved on products such as medical devices, advanced machinery and lamb.

Based on 2022 trade statistics, the department claims this amounts to India cutting tariffs worth over ₹400 million when the deal comes into force, which will more than double to ₹900 million after 10 years.

The pact marks the opening of India's long-guarded markets, including automobiles, setting an early example for the South Asian nation's likely approach to dealing with major Western powers such as the US and the European Union.

Both countries are also seeking bilateral deals with the United States to remove some of Trump's tariffs that have upended the global trade

system, and the resulting turmoil sharpened focus in both London and New Delhi on the need to launch a UK-India trade deal. It also means Britain's most significant trade deal since it left the European Union in 2020.

Stop-start negotiations

Talks for a free trade deal between India and Britain were initially launched in January 2022, and became a symbol of Britain's hopes for its independence from policy after Brexit. But negotiations were stalled, with Britain having four different prime ministers since the deal came into force.

Britain's Labour Party, elected last July, moved rapidly to conclude a deal after restarting talks in February, with last-minute talks between the countries' trade ministers in London last week enough to clinch a deal.

With inputs from Reuters and PTI

Tepid listing for Ather

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Calcutta: The first mainboard initial public offer of financial year 2025-26 from Ather Energy had a muted debut on Tuesday, a day market sentiments remained cautious and volatility was high amid escalating geopolitical tensions.

Investment bankers and market analysts do not expect to see much of a public issues now coming from the pipeline.

The stocks of the electric two-wheeler ended at ₹302.50 at the Bombay Stock Exchange, down 7.22 per cent against its opening price and down 5.76 per cent from its issue price.

Ather Energy became the second company in the segment to go public after Ola Electric, which was listed last year.

At the highest end of the range, the company's total IPO size is estimated at ₹2,981 crore, resulting in a valuation of ₹11,956 crore.

Ather Energy made its muted debut on the stock market, opening with a modest 2 per cent gain... The stock's weak listing and subsequent dip reflect caution by investors around its steep valuation," Gaurav Garg, analyst at Lemon Tree Desk.

However, as the border tensions began to rise, several companies are now evaluating their options.

At the lowest end of the range, the company's total IPO size is estimated at ₹2,000 crore, looking to raise ₹1,02,000 crore, were waiting for Sebi's approval for their public offers.

Under Section 210, the ministry has powers to order a probe into the affairs of a company on various grounds, including its public interest.

Earlier, the ministry had said it would take necessary action in the matter after examining the Sebi order.

IPO pipeline

Ather's debut was seen as a barometer of investor sentiment for primary issues this year, and its lacklustre entry into the market could further dent corporate confidence in dipping their feet in a choppy equity market.

At the start of the financial year, 49 companies had approval from the market regulator, proposing to raise ₹8,400 crore. Another 67 companies, looking to raise ₹1,02,000 crore, were waiting for Sebi's approval for their public offers.

However, as the border tensions began to rise, several companies are now evaluating their options.

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BluSmart Mobility, which

offers ride-hailing services, is promoted by Anmol Singh Jaggi and his wife.

The officials said that the ministry ordered an investigation against the companies last week under Section 210 of the Companies Act, 2013.

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BluSmart Mobility, which

Probe: Did Union Bank play by the book?

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Calcutta: Government-owned Union Bank on Tuesday said it is probing lapses in the procurement of books titled 'India@100: Envisioning Tomorrow's Economic Powerhouse' written by former International Monetary Fund (IMF) executive director K.V. Subramanian and valued at ₹7,25 crores.

Notably, the bank's probe comes at a time the government of India has terminated the services of Subramanian, six months ahead of his three-year tenure.

"The bank has made the

procurement, which are being examined by the bank," Union Bank has said in a stock exchange filing on Tuesday. At ₹118.35, the bank's shares were down 6.18 per cent on the Bombay Stock Exchange.

The exchange filing came after it was reported that Union Bank ordered the copies of the book distribution through the bank's zonal and regional offices of its 100th anniversary-linked initiatives to promote economic awareness. However, the book's purchase has raised concerns over its necessity and the use of public money.

The decision of the government-owned bank drew flak from the Congress, with the party claiming the govern-

were meant to be distributed through zonal and regional offices of the Union Bank of India to schools, colleges and libraries. Each of the bank's 18 zonal offices was meant to receive 10,525 copies, she alleged.

"But it now seems that hard evidence has left the government embarrassed and forced its premature removal from the post of India's executive director at the World Bank, before the completion of his three-year term," she claimed.

It is also alleged that Subramanian used his official position to pressure some institutions to purchase his book.

Claims internal documents of the public sector bank, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shringi claimed these books

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through zonal and regional offices of the Union Bank of India to schools, colleges and libraries. Each of the bank's 18 zonal offices was meant to receive 10,525 copies, she alleged.

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It is also alleged that Subramanian used his official position to pressure some institutions to purchase his book.

The All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) has also reportedly called for a probe into "wasteful expend-

iture" by Union Bank.

The appointment and termination of any member on the executive board of the IMF, comprising 25 directors, is a decision that is made by the member countries. Following Subramanian's termination, Prakashwar Iyer, executive director at the World Bank, has been temporarily entrusted with the responsibility of being the acting vice-chairman on the board of the IMF ahead of a May 9 meeting.

Subramanian was appointed as the executive director (India) at the IMF with effect from November 1, 2022, for a period of three years. Prior to this, he has served as the chief economic adviser to the government.

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HELD FOR
₹2.7 CRORE
ROBBERY
FROM TAXI

The Telegraph NO ONE KNOWS OUR CITY BETTER

METRO

TWO CITY SCHOOLS PLAN MOCK DRILLS P9 • HAWKERS REMOVED FROM NEW MARKET ROADS P8

CALCUTTA WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2025

XXCE

GOOD MORNING

EVENTS

■ The Rhoona art society presents Parikrama, a journey of 15 years with a bouquet of painting, sculpture and photography, Academy of Fine Arts, noon to 8pm. (Till May 8)

HS results today

■ CALCUTTA: The results of the state higher secondary exams will be out on May 7. The HS council said last week that the results can be viewed on and downloaded from its official websites after 2pm on Wednesday. Some of the websites are: <https://results.digilocker.gov.in>; www.indiaresults.com; [results.shiksha.com](http://www.results.shiksha.com); <https://wb.2abplive.com>; result.net/wbchseapp.com and www.jsterrun.in.

Spam detection

■ CALCUTTA: A telecom service provider has introduced a feature where businesses can display their brand name on the recipient's mobile screen in an outgoing call. This will help people tell genuine calls from spam, the service provider said. The service, "business name display", has been launched by Airtel.

Wall collapse

■ TALLAH: Four people were injured after portions of the boundary wall of a godown in Tallah caved in on Tuesday. The injured were treated and discharged from RG Kar hospital, police said.

Madhyamik 2026

■ CALCUTTA: The state secondary education board has announced that next year's Madhyamik will start on February 2. The exams on first languages, second languages, history, geography, mathematics, physical science, life science and optional elective subjects will be held on February 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12, respectively. In May, 10 notice periods are said to date of physical education, social service and work education will be announced later.

WEATHER

YESTERDAY	
Maximum:	34.5°C (-1.2)
Minimum:	27.7°C (+0.9)
RAINFALL:	NIL
HUMIDITY:	Max: 88%; Min: 54%
THE FORECAST	
Maximum	35°C
Minimum	26°C
EXPECTED:	Partly cloudy sky
SUNSET	6.06pm
SUNRISE	5.01am

'ASSIMILATION' TO BE UNDER SUPERVISION OF AUTHORITIES

IIT to bring back student bonding programme

SUBHANKAR CHOWDHURY

Kharagpur: IIT Kharagpur has decided to reintroduce its assimilation programme to improve bonding among students following the spate of deaths on the campus.

The assimilation programme, which used to last for three days, will now be new students to academic and campus life and help them get acquainted with the institution's culture and resources. Senior students help juniors get acquainted.

The IIT authorities had stopped the programme in June 2023, after the family of Faizan Ahmed, a

HC halts axe on rooftop hangouts for 2 weeks

DEBRAJ MITRA AND TAPAS GHOSH



A rooftop pub in central Calcutta and (below) in south Calcutta. Pictures by Bishwanup Dutta



lishments," the official said.

Key points from the order

Justice Gaurang Kanth's order uploaded to the court website on Tuesday evening, made several significant observations.

The central question is whether emergency action under Section 400(8) of the KMC Act is warranted or not.

A senior state government official confirmed that the KMC will halt demolitions of all similar establishments. "A few restaurants have moved the court. But, in principle, the case affects all rooftop estab-

lishments," he said.

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MOOD MATTERS

The war drums have, unfortunately, been sounded in both India and Pakistan in the aftermath of the terrorist strike in Pahalgam. But the beats seem to differ a bit. In India, the media has been the principal warmonger, drumming up public sentiment in favour of an aggressive response. The story in Pakistan, evidently, is more complicated because there seems to be a discernible gap between the political and the public responses to the possibility of conflict. Pakistan's Establishment — the military leadership, especially the hawkish army chief, Asim Munir, along with the civilian government — has adhered to predictable, thunderous rhetoric. But the civilian reaction, unlike that in 2019 when there was a military escalation between the two nations, has been circumspect. Two principal reasons are being cited to explain this phenomenon. The first pertains to Pakistan's economy. High inflation and joblessness are matters consuming the *aam admi* in Pakistan. That the economy is being helped to breathe by largesse from the International Monetary Fund must be weighing on the minds of Pakistan's prediction constituency. In fact, Moody's latest forecast about prolonged tensions with India being injurious to Pakistan's limping economy is likely to sullen the public mood further. The second, and equally important, factor concerns a slight shift in the compact between Rawalpindi and ordinary Pakistanis. Pakistan's army undoubtedly commands public fealty. But there are also signs of stress, especially after the ouster of Imran Khan — a favourite of the man of the street — by the army. That Mr Munir is Mr Khan's chief adversary in the corridors of power has added to the complications in the ties between the military and the people of Pakistan. These developments in Pakistan merit an enquiry: could economic distress and a weakened democracy function as anti-war devices?

New Delhi must take note of this state of public disaffection with the powers that be in its recalcitrant neighbour. A full-scale conflict could make Pakistan stand behind the civil-military apparatus. Perhaps there is wisdom in India utilising the sombre public mood in Pakistan to its advantage; leveraging it to bring pressure on Pakistan's deep State that facilitates cross-border terrorism could be one option that can be looked into. Piling further economic pressure on its beleaguered economy, as opposed to a full-blown conflict, in conjunction with a reasoned strategic response is the need of the hour.

WAR AND PEACE

Interference in academic matters has almost become commonplace in Indian universities. At a meeting of the Standing Committee on Academic Matters of Delhi University, the chairperson objected to the inclusion of the Kashmir issue and the Israel-Palestine conflict as case studies in the section named the 'Psychology of Peace' in the proposed psychology syllabus. The case studies were part of the chapter on conflict and conflict resolution. The chairperson said that the Kashmir issue had been 'resolved' — this, despite the recent bloodshed in Pahalgam — and there was no need for lessons on the Israel-Palestine conflict. The logic is elusive. The aim of the section was to help students understand the concepts of peace, its need, peace process and its psychology. If the Kashmir issue was already resolved, then there could be nothing better for students to understand the process. The subject of the Israel-Palestine conflict, historical as well as current, would be enormously helpful in exploring the psychology of conflict and the failure of peace processes. But the chairperson's reason to excise it was that it was unnecessary. Evidently he does not mind if students remain ignorant of the world they live in. His objections have been criticised as politically motivated and as ideological interference in academic matters. More so, because he said that students should learn from ancient Indian texts such as the *Mahabharata* and the *Gita* to gain an indigenous perspective on peace.

The chairperson's intervention raises an issue that is independent of his point of view. Would ancient texts be more illuminating than current or recent events in understanding conflict, its resolution, and the psychology of peace? Certainly, the ancient story of a conflict that could have been avoided might be useful given that the social arrangements, reasons for the conflict, and efforts at peace were unlike those in present times. There is no harm in a plurality of perspectives. But present or recent conflicts and their resolution — when that happens — are more meaningful because they are contemporary; they are familiar contentions of ethnicity, ideology or territorial aggression set in a world of known social dispensations, modern ideas and thinking processes, recognisable fears and forms of resistance. Both perspectives can be included for a full understanding, excluding specific case studies to satisfy ideological inclinations is an assault on academic autonomy and a harmful narrowing of academic vision.

SCRIPPSI

'The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains.'

KARL MARX

Why should anyone continue being Left?

Beacon of hope

PRABHAT PATNAIK

The Soviet Union has collapsed; whether China remains socialist has become a matter for research. The question, therefore, arises: why should anyone, other than a person with a religious streak, continue being Left and believing in a socialist future for mankind? This question would indeed have been quite clutching if the recent decline of the Left had been accompanied by a flourishing of capitalism; that would have proved that the Left's decline was based on a fundamental flaw in its theoretical understanding.

The world today, however, is characterised by a capitalism that is afflicted not just by a massive economic crisis and political repression but it is also actually presiding over a genocide on a scale unprecedented in living memory. The only liveable future one can visualise for mankind today is a socialist future whose arrival may be painful and delayed but is essential for escaping from the theoretical understanding.

The economic crisis is obvious. From the finding by the American economist, Joseph Stiglitz, that the real wage of an average male American worker in 2011 was marginally lower than that in 1968 to the overwhelming evidence of an increase in nutritional deprivation in India and in much of the Global South between 1993-94 and 2011-12, it is clear that even the heyday of neoliberal capitalism had seen a process of absolute universalisation of the working people everywhere; the slowdown in the world economy and the collapse of the US housing 'bubble', which has now morphed into a secular stagnation, and mounting unemployment has made matters far worse for them.

The Keynesian prescription of a rise in State expenditure to counter sluggish demand does not work under neoliberal capitalism. State expenditure can increase employment only if it is financed either by a larger fiscal deficit or by larger taxes on the rich; taxing the working people and using the tax proceeds for non-State expenditure do not increase aggregate demand since the working people consume much of their incomes anyway.

Both ways of financing larger State expenditure are anathema for finance capital. Since finance today is globalised while States remain nation-states, the latter must defer to the wishes of the former to avoid debilitating capital flights. This rules out the Keynesian remedy for countering stagnation: it makes the nation-state powerless to overcome it.

More so, there is a strong neo-fascist upsurge all over the world that is supported by monopoly capital. It provides a diversionary discourse so that the hegemony of monopoly capital faces no threat from the ongoing crisis. In India, this

Satyajit Mallick
Emeritus, Centre for Economic Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Shared resource

■ Sir — While all eyes are on India and Pakistan and the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, another contest over the sharing of water is brewing within the country. The escalating dispute between Punjab and Haryana over water allocation from the Beas Management Board is alarming. While Punjab's concerns regarding its depleted aquifers are valid, physical obstruction of Central infrastructure undermines the rule of law. Both states must exhibit statesmanship and restraint. Provoking public sentiment on such an emotive issue is risky. The Centre should act as a neutral arbiter, addressing the historical grievances that do not overshadow present responsibilities. River waters are not political trophies but life-giving resources that must be managed with wisdom, fairness, and cooperation, not brinkmanship.

Satyajit Mallick,
Siliguri

■ Sir — It is deeply concerning to witness the resurgence of hostilities between Punjab and Haryana over river water distribution. History offers grim warnings: the Dharma Yudh Morcha and subsequent insurrections had devastating consequences. Rekindling tensions through aggressive actions and emotive rhetoric risks destabilising a sensitive border state. The BBMB must remain impartial and allow time to settle disputes to established norms. The people deserve leadership that seeks equita-

Ashok Kumar Kar,
Calcutta

ble and lasting solutions, not performative gestures. Water security can only be achieved through unity and scientific planning, not by repeating the mistakes of past decades.

Priyanshi Dash,
Barpeta, Odisha

■ Sir — The ongoing dispute between Punjab and Haryana has become a political spectacle, overshadowing



alliance between neo-fascism and monopoly capital has taken the form of a corporate-Hindutva alliance.

The neo-fascist discourse shifts attention from the prevailing economic distress of the working people and focuses instead on the 'Other' — those whom it 'Others' and against whom it generates hatred within the majority; this has the added 'advantage' from the point of view of monopoly capital of disrupting the unity of the working people and preventing any collective action on their part against its hegemony. At present, capitalism, therefore, has brought both economic distress for the people and political repression that are unprecedented at least over the last half-century. Moreover, there is no possibility of a return to the days of offshoots of neoliberal capitalism: the same constraints that prevent State intervention for overcoming the crisis within a liberal bourgeois dispensation also apply when the State is headed by neo-fascists for globalised finance capital's opposition to fiscal deficits or taxes on the rich does not disappear when the State is headed by neo-fascists.

Donald Trump's resort to higher tariffs must be seen in this context. Since demand cannot be increased through State expenditure, the only way to increase demand for consumption in the country is by snatching it away from other countries by pursuing what is called 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policies. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, before the fascist governments in Japan and Germany had expanded demand by increasing military expenditure and financing it by massive fiscal deficits (they could do this because finance capital was not globalised but *national* and could be cajoled into accepting larger

fiscal deficits), there had been a spate of 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policies through competitive exchange rate depreciations following the collapse of the Gold Standard.

Trump has started a similar 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policy as the weapon. The success of such a policy for any particular country depends upon whether other countries retaliate; if they do, then all countries become even worse off collectively than they were before the spate of competitive 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policies began. In the present case, countries of the Global South are likely to be brow-beaten into eschewing retaliation, even bringing down their own tariffs in exchange for the Americans not raising theirs. This will be disastrous for the working people in the Global South, especially farmers in a country like India, destroy food security, and expose these countries to the danger of famines; Africa, where foodgrain self-sufficiency was abandoned earlier, provides a classic example of this.

While the economic distress and political repression unleashed by contemporary capitalism are evident, some may object to my including the Gaza genocide among the crimes of capitalism. How does capitalism then worsen the situation? By pushing it to the extreme, accept their argument, ignoring the unanimous support that Benjamin Netanyahu is getting from big capitalist powers and the obvious plan of imperialism to use Israel as its *garde me* in the Middle-east. Even then, it is undeniable that the Left everywhere is the most consistent force standing up for the Palestinians. Its historical role for mankind's survival and for the preservation of sanity is unquestionable.

What the male gaze desires

SREEDEEP BHATTACHARYA

The male gaze has existed since time immemorial. But the advent of camera and print technology made that gaze penetrative and pervasive. The invention and the dissemination of these two technologies, which facilitated the reproduction of images, accelerated the objectification of the female body. Other forms of technological mediation — from video to virtual reality — have further advanced the conversion of flesh into flesh.

Gaze is not just an act of looking; the term connotes inequality of power. The male gaze conceives the woman as an object of desire and pleasure — denies her agency. The market not only facilitates such an objectification but also normalises its access across media platforms. The fragmented female body, disassociated from her persona, thus becomes a popular global commodity.

But the desirable female body must conform to certain standards pertaining to size, weight, height and skin colour. An entire regime of exercise, diet, grooming, cosmetics, supervision, surgery aims to make the body dazzling before it is put on display to lure attention. Patriarchal capitalism has convinced us of the importance of gazing at the 'idealised' body. Any other body type is useless for the mass production and the mass consumption of the desirability.

It is imperative for this patriarchal fiction to project men as being in charge as chasers and women as passive recipients. The pornography industry is the epitome of patriarchy's imagination and bankruptcy. It produces the most blatant displays of male lust. Bodies, intimacy, sexuality — everything is thoroughly disembodied and disjointed within the pornographic gaze. Implicit and apparent in this position and display is the position of power. Who has the power to control and display women's bodies, to what extent, and for whom? These are not ethical questions concerning

Sreedeep Bhattacharya is an Associate Professor in Shiv Nadar University

munity, its social acceptability, or its aesthetic rendering. These queries are about the possession, projection and production of women's bodies to cater to the male gaze, to male validation; it is about a process that degrades the dignity of women and turns them into subjects of objectification.

Objectification need not be confined to visibility only. Social practices such as teasing and coercion can be deployed towards the submission of women in a bid to valorise the idea of male conquest. If she is too eager, then she can be subjected to moral judgement. In case she resists, the resistance should be broken through undue ad-



vances. If she still acts unwilling, then she has to be taught a lesson. Consequently, in this celebration of machismo and male pride, there is no concern.

There is no dearth of the patriarchal valorisation of men as being in charge as chasers and women as passive recipients. The pornography industry is the epitome of patriarchy's imagination and bankruptcy. It produces the most blatant displays of male lust. Bodies, intimacy, sexuality — everything is thoroughly disembodied and disjointed within the pornographic gaze. Implicit and apparent in this position and display is the position of power. Who has the power to control and display women's bodies, to what extent, and for whom? These are not ethical questions concerning

regional sentiments. With Punjab facing severe groundwater depletion and Haryana needing its rightful share, the path forward lies in scientific assessment, fair allocation, and cooperative federalism. Politicians must resist exploiting public emotion for short-term gain.

Amir Zaman,
Mehalgacha

Historic mistake

■ Sir — The proposal to reopen the Alcatraz prison as a symbol of 'law and order' is deeply troubling. Such a gesture revives memories of harsh, punitive measures and authoritarian ideals rather than addressing modern justice issues. Alcatraz, with its grim legacy, would remain a historical site reminding society of past excesses. The focus ought to be on rehabilitation and humane incarceration.

Restoring a notorious prison for political theatre reflects poorly on democratic values. The justice system deserves progressive policies rooted in evidence. But the president of the United States of America, Donald Trump, does not understand this.

Bal Govind,
Noida

■ Sir — Alcatraz was closed for sound reasons: exorbitant costs, severe conditions, and an outdated penal philosophy. Revisiting such a failed model suggests a retreat from more enlightened justice approaches. Public resources should be better allocated towards improving rehabilitation, addressing root causes

of crime, and reforming overcrowded prison systems. Romanticising a facility once known as 'Devil's Island' signals a shift towards performative governance rather than meaningful policy. History has taught valuable lessons; reopening Alcatraz would be an act of historical amnesia, not strength.

In her pathbreaking book, *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir wrote, 'she could only win by losing, so she remains lost'. This sentiment is perhaps borne out by the pervercity of the male gaze.

Mohammad Asad,
Mumbai

Travel in style

■ Sir — The recent viral video of four impeccably-be



had cats travelling on Paris highlights what impossible possibilities travel and adventure training can achieve. In an age when air travel often brings tales of stress and disruption, this feline quartet provided a refreshing example of calm companionship.

M. Jayaram,
Sholavandan, Tamil Nadu

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The Telegraph
6 Pratap Sarkr Street,
Calcutta 700011
tedit@abp.in

**THE TIP**

To build a strong team, develop a regular ritual such as a daily tea break, a weekly lunch or after-work drinks

The Telegraph WELLNESS

CALCUTTA WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2025

STRIKE THREE

New research says 17 overlapping factors affect risk of stroke, dementia and late-life depression. **Nina Agrawal** on lifestyle changes to lower risk

Although they may appear unrelated, people who have dementia, depression or who experience a stroke often end up having one or both of the other conditions too, said Dr Sanjula Singh, a principal investigator at the Brain Care Labs at Massachusetts General Hospital, US, and the lead author of the study. That's because they may share underlying damage to small blood vessels in the brain, experts said.

Some of the risk factors common to the three brain diseases, including high blood pressure and diabetes, appear to cause this kind of damage. Research suggests that at least 60 per cent of strokes, 40 per cent of dementia cases and 35 per cent of late-life depression can either be prevented or slowed by controlling risk factors.

"Those are striking numbers," said Dr Stephanie Collier, director of education in the division of geriatric psychiatry at McLean Hospital in Massachusetts, US. "If you can really optimise the lifestyle pieces of the modifiable pieces, then you're at such a high risk that you can't prevent it without disability."

Often, the risk factors for these diseases are interconnected, and addressing one — for example, getting more exercise by going for routine walks with a friend — can also help you address others, like excess weight and social isolation.

"If you're starting to work on one of them, very often you're actually improving multiple at the same time," Dr Singh said. "That's a great way to start."

Protective Factors

The study, which looked

at data from 59 meta-anal-



SMART MOVE: Tasks such as reading, solving puzzles or playing chess protect against brain diseases

Factors That Increase Risk

These identified six factors that lower your risk of brain diseases:

- Low to moderate alcohol intake (consuming one to three drinks a day had a smaller benefit than consuming less than one drink a day)
- Cognitive activity, meaning regular engaging in mentally stimulating tasks such as reading or doing puzzles or playing chess
- A diet high in vegetables, fruit, dairy, fish and nuts
- Moderate or high levels of physical activity
- A sense of purpose in life
- An active social life and a large social network

The study also identified 13 health characteristics and habits that make you more likely to develop dementia, a stroke or late-life depression. (Altogether, the protective and harmful factors add up to 19 factors because two of them, diet and social connections, can increase or decrease risk, depending on their quality.)

The study initially looked at risk factors linked to two or more of the three conditions. It did not prove that these risk factors directly cause the diseases — all it showed was an association.

Trying to tackle all of

these behaviours for brain health might feel overwhelming. But Dr Singh suggested treating the list like a menu of options: "Choose just a first risk factor and then take it step by step," she said.

Where to Begin

The study also identified which specific risk factors and protective habits have a particularly notable effect on brain health. Addressing those, doctors said, is a great place to start.

The study initially looked at risk factors linked to two or more of the three conditions. It did not prove that these risk factors directly cause the diseases — all it showed was an association.

The study found that high blood pressure was the greatest individual

risk factor for developing any of the three diseases, in large part because it nearly triples the risk of stroke. One way to combat that might start by lowering salt intake, exercising more or losing weight, said Dr Alison Moore, chief of the division of geriatrics, gerontology and palliative care at the University of California San Diego in the US. But those interventions aren't always enough, she said, especially as we age and our blood vessels stiffen. That's when medication can help.

■ Flex your physical and mental muscles. Bonus points if it is with friends.

Moderate and high physical activity substantially decreased the chances of stroke and dementia, as did having a large social network. Still, Dr Collier said the data reaffirms her advice to patients to "get involved in mental tasks that are 'a little bit difficult'" — such as reading, doing puzzles or learning a new instrument. Ideally, she said, you'd do those activities with some body else, because conversation can be cognitively stimulating and because you get the added benefit of social interaction.

■ Start early if you can. You have the right time to start making lifestyle changes "is generally not older age; it's middle age." That can prevent even early disease from developing.

But taking steps to reduce these risk factors can help prevent or slow the progression of disease later in life, too. It can also benefit patients who have a family history or genetic predisposition to these diseases, who "often feel like it's their inevitable fate", Dr Singh said. But "there are things they can do — we all can do — to take better care of their brains."

NYTN

Why mother's milk is best for baby



DR GITĀ MATHAI

Human babies need nursing from the time they are born until they are able to feed for themselves.

For the first six months of life the best food for the baby is mother's milk. Many infant formula manufacturers have tried to duplicate breast milk, but they have not yet been successful.

All animals have different digestive systems and nutritional requirements. Breast milk is ideally formulated for digestion by human babies. (Cow's milk is best for the calf). Human milk provides all the baby's requirements. In addition to energy, it contains immunoglobulins from the mother. This protects the baby against infectious diseases to which the mother has already been exposed or has received immunotherapy.

Human females are born with two breasts. These start to develop during puberty and become functional during pregnancy. Hormones are released during pregnancy which makes the breast grow and start functioning.

In the first few days after birth the milk is called colostrum. It provides easily digestible nutrition and immunoglobulins to prevent disease. Within a few days, this becomes proper milk which is released as per demand under the influence of hormones.

Milk production is a "letdown" reflex, so as the baby suckles and stimulates the nipple, milk is constantly produced. Milk may also be produced on the side from which the baby is not feeding, causing some leakage. When the baby stops feeding, the milk production stops as the letdown reflex ceases. The milk does not stay in the breast for a long time. If you stop feeding for a few hours, the milk will not spoil.

Milk can be expressed from the breast and stored outside. It can be kept at room temperature for four

hours, refrigerated for four days and frozen for four months. This expressed milk can be warmed and fed to the baby as required.

Sometimes, the woman feels that the breast milk is not adequate because when she expresses the milk, she feels that a sufficient amount is not available. It is enough if the baby sleeps for two to three hours after feeding and passes adequate amounts of urine.

A tablet called metoclopramide is sometimes prescribed twice a day 10 minutes before food to establish and increase lactation. A simple natural way to do this is to drink a glass of water before feeding the baby and then another glass as soon as you finish. Also, eat an adequate, nutritious diet. Sit down and feel the baby and hold it faced up at a 45° angle so that both of you are comfortable. The room should not be too hot or cold. It should be quiet and peaceful. If the mother is under a lot of stress, enough milk may not be produced.

Milk is the only food that the baby requires for six months or 180 days. After that, if the mother is still weaning foods can be introduced. Breast milk can be continued for one or two years. Breastfeeding may produce amenorrhoea (absence of menstruation) but it does not inhibit ovulation, so you can become pregnant while breastfeeding.

Sometimes milk is produced in a non-pregnant woman or even in a man. This is a condition called galactorrhoea. It needs investigations with blood tests and scans.

This milk secretion may occur under the influence of hormones secreted by the pituitary gland like prolactin or thyroid stimulating hormone. Medications such as anti-psychotics, anti-depressants or even anti-acidity drugs can increase prolactin levels and produce milk. Continuous irritation of the breast by tight clothing or renal failure can also cause lactation.

Breast milk is a living, dynamic substance, uniquely designed to nourish and protect babies during their most vulnerable stage of life. You must ensure that the baby gets it for optimal growth.

The writer has a family practice at Vellore and is the author of *Staying Healthy in Modern India*. If you have any questions on health issues please write to yourhealthgm@yahoo.co.in

RISES IN THE EAST



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STAR WATCH

2022: Quinton de Kock scores his third half-century of the season, as Lucknow Super Giants trample Kolkata Knight Riders in Pune by 75 runs, the biggest victory margin in terms of runs in the edition

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SPORT

ENRIQUE WARNS PSG OF ARSENAL FIGHTBACK P14

CALCUTTA WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2025



XXCE

IN BRIEF

Vatican visit on cards

■ ROMA: Three-time Rome champion Iga Swiatek and USA's Coco Gauff have said they will head down to the Vatican, joining the crowds in St Peter's Square, if they get the chance while preparing for the Italian Open just up the road. "I'm notatholic, but I do go because I feel like it's an historic thing," Gauff, the 2023 US Open champion, said on Tuesday. "With the whole smoke thing, I thought that was cool. I would like to go and see it and be around it since we're here." During the conclave, ballots are burned and black smoke from the chimney means no election; white smoke signals the cardinals have chosen a pope. The conclave starts on Wednesday and the Italian Open lasts through May 18.

Wild cards

■ ORLANDO: Iva Jovic, a 17-year-old, and Emilija Nava, a 23-year-old, claimed their first Open wild-card invitations from the US Tennis Association on Monday by finishing atop the standings based on points earned at tournaments across five weeks. AP

Tri-series

■ COLOMBO: India will be eager to bounce back from their loss and confirm their spot in the final when they face a struggling South African side in the women's Tri-series here on Wednesday. PTI

Titans stun Mumbai in last-ball thriller



Jasprit Bumrah celebrates after dismissing Gujarat Titans captain Shubman Gill in the on again-off again match at the Wankhede on Tuesday. The Titans, however, pulled off a three-wicket win with the target reduced to 147 in 19 overs due to rain. (Reuters)

OUR BUREAU

Gujarat Titans pulled off a thrilling three-wicket victory against Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede on Tuesday. The hosts thus suffered their first loss after six matches.

The Titans' DLS target was revised to 147 and they knocked off the required 15 runs in the 19th over following a rain break. Rahul Tewatia remained unbeaten on 11 off eight balls as victory was achieved in the last over.

The Titans had everything in their control before the first rain interruption. They were steadily progressing towards the target of 156 while keeping the DLS equation in mind.

They were 107/2 after 14 overs with Shubman Gill and Suresh Rutherford in control when rain took the players off the ground. When they returned, Bumrah delivered the knockout blow by removing Gill.

One-man show

Bumrah yet again showed why he is considered the best across formats. His first two overs produced just six runs

IPL STANDINGS

	P	W	L	NR	NRR	PI
GT	11	8	3	0	+0.793	16
RCB	11	8	3	0	+0.482	16
PKS	11	7	3	1	+0.376	15
MI	12	7	5	0	+1.156	14
DC	11	6	4	1	+0.362	13
KKR	11	5	5	1	+0.249	11
LSC	11	5	6	0	-0.469	10
SRH	11	3	7	1	-1.192	7
RR	12	3	9	0	-0.718	6
CSK	11	2	9	0	-1.117	4

Updated till Tuesday's match.

and he then came back to remove Gill after the rain break.

The ball pitched outside the off stump and nipped back sharply to knock off Gill's stumps. The Titans captain was set for a big score having done the hard work but was hurried into his stroke, the ball nipping the fast bad before ricocheting into the stumps.

The dismissal gave Bumrah a huge boost and Bumrah returned to dismiss Shabrukh Khan in his next over. The ball was back of a length and slanted into his stumps to leave Shabrukh clueless.

Ashwini Kumar and Trent Boult also benefited from Bumrah's exploits at the other end.

Batting collapse

Mumbai earlier huffed and puffed their way to 155/8 following a failure by their openers and a middle-order collapse at the Wankhede.

It was mainly due to a 71-run third-wicket partnership off 43 balls between Suryaku-

MATCH-METER

MI	GT
56/2 Powerplay	29/1
5 Sixes	5
14 Fours	12
45 Dots bowled	47
2 30+ score	2

GT won by 3 wickets (DLS method)

Match referee: Shubman Gill

Umpires: MS Dhoni, A.K. Sharma

Non-umpire: S. Venkatesh

Referee: M.S. Dhoni

Umpires: S. Venkatesh, A.K. Sharma

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Xaverian 5-a-side meet

OUR BUREAU

Calcutta: Eight corporate-backed franchise teams will take part in the second edition of the Xaverian Soccer League, organised by St Xavier's College Alumni Association in collaboration with the department of sports, St Xavier's College (Autonomous).

The league, first started in 2024, has swiftly become one of the city's most anticipated youth football events.

Each squad features a carefully curated mix of players — one marquee player, one guest player, three current students and three alumni players resulting in a vibrant, inter-generational five-a-side football format.

The marquee players are Bahim Neh (Sharp Shooters), Mehtab Hussain (Dreco Accelerate), Ashim Biswas (Xaverian Tigers), Md Rafique (BTL Blasters), Deepak Mondal (Levitans), Deepankar Roy (Warriors), Denson Devdas (Digital Strikers) and Alivito D'Cunha (LION Lions).

"XSL reflects our commitment to education, supported by blending academics with sports and camaraderie. It's heartening to see students, alumni, and sports personalities come together in this celebration," said principal Father Dominic Satio, St Xavier's College (Autonomous), Calcutta.

Footballer dead

Buenos Aires: Former Argentina defender Luis Galvan, a member of the team that won the 1978 World Cup, died on Monday at the age of 77, the Argentine Football Association (AFA) said.

Galvan also represented Argentina at the 1982 World Cup in Spain, scoring a total 34 caps for the national team. He retired from the international game in 1983.

Reuters



Crystal Palace's Eberechi Eze (extreme right) converts a penalty against Nottingham Forest at Selhurst Park in London on Monday. (Reuters)

Forest suffer setback

PREMIER LEAGUE

PALACE	1
FOREST	1

London: Nottingham Forest's quest for a Champions League berth next season suffered a setback when they were held to a 1-1 draw by Crystal Palace in a Premier League match on Monday.

Murillo cancelled out Eberechi Eze's penalty for the home side.

The draw leaves Forest in sixth place in the table on 61 points from 35 games, two points behind fifth-placed Chelsea in the final Champions League qualification position.

Mid-table Palace took the

lead at Selhurst Park when Eze converted a penalty on the hour mark after Forest goalkeeper Matz Sels had felled Tyrick Mitchell. Eze also hit the post.

The lead lasted four minutes before Nuno Williams' shot was deflected into the Palace net by defender Murillo, who limped off shortly afterwards with a hamstring injury that could see him miss Forest's run-in to the end of the campaign.

"It was a game of two halves," Forest manager Nuno Espirito Santo told Sports.

"In the first half we controlled the game. In the second, we started good but then Palace reacted. It was good for us that we achieved the goal so

soon after Palace scored.

"The final games (of the season) are going to be like this, nervous games, tight games. Everybody is fighting for something. It is up to us to read."

Palace have still not beaten Forest in the top division since 1991 but stepped closer to their Premier League record points of 49.

They have 46 with three games to play.

"We had quite a few chances at the end," Eze said.

"I thought we were going to take it, but I think a point, we'll take it. We're positive, we know we put in a good performance."

It took almost 35 minutes for Palace to have the first ef-

fort on goal when Daniel Mwana's volley from 10 yards was well saved by Sels.

Palace were awarded a penalty in the 60th minute which Sels was felled by an out-stretched leg for what looked like a clear penalty. However, it was confirmed only after a VAR confirmation.

Eze, who missed a spot-kick at Newcastle United last month, swept the ball into the left corner, just past the outstretched arm of Sels.

Forest were soon level though. The corner was cleared to Williams on the edge of the box and his low shot was intentionally deflected into the net by Murillo.

Reuters

AC Milan keep hopes alive

Genoa (Italy): AC Milan scored twice in two minutes to beat Genoa 2-1 in Serie A on Monday and keep alive their slim hopes of a place in next year's Champions League.

Genoa substitute Vittinha

scored a minute after taking the field to give his side the lead after 61 minutes.

But Rafael Leao levelled 15 minutes later and his strike was deflected into the net. Just a minute later, Genoa captain Morten Frendrup put one into his own net.

Although Milan remained

in ninth place, they closed the gap on the top four to six points. Juventus are fourth, equal on points with Roma and Lazio below it. Three rounds remain.

LEAGUE ROUND-UP

Milan's last three games are against Bologna, Roma and bottom club Monza.

Genoa have lost their last three games and sit at 13th.

Respite for Girona

Girona won for the first time

in 12 league games, 1-0 against Mallorca and eased their La Liga relegation fears on Monday. Christian Stuani got the all-important goal in the 10th minute when he pounced on a rebound and lashed home.

It was the 33-year-old striker's 139th goal for the club since joining from Midtjylland in 2017.

The result lifted Girona six points clear of the relegation zone with four matches remaining. Mallorca stayed at ninth.

AP, Reuters



AC Milan's Rafael Leao

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LEAGUE ROUND-UP

Dembele fit, coach wants an encore of last week's heroics vs Gunners

Paris: Paris Saint-Germain received a boost ahead of Wednesday's Champions League semi-final second leg against Arsenal with Ousmane Dembele passed fit as the French champions look to turn growing squad cohesion into a place in the final.

Dembele, who scored the only goal in last week's 1-0 win at the Emirates Stadium, picked up a muscle injury during that match but will be available at the Parc des Princes.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

"He has been training with the squad for two days, so he is available for tomorrow (Wednesday). I have told my players, 'I want to see my team play well,'" PSG coach Luis Enrique told a press conference on Tuesday.

It is welcome news for a PSG side whose progress this season has been built less on individual brilliance and more on the kind of collective spirit and tactical maturity that has often eluded them in past European campaigns.

PSG defender Achraf Hakimi said he believes Dembele has recovered well.

"He really wants to play," Hakimi said.

"Ousmane is a different kind of player. He makes you want to go and watch the game in the stadium, he can change the course of a match at any moment, he's a genius with the ball. We're delighted to have him back."



Arsenal's Ethan Nwaniyi with Raheem Sterling and teammates during training in London on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Luis Enrique, brought in to overhaul a team once shaped around marquee stars, has made no secret of his mission to build a unit capable of competing at the highest level.

"This season we've grown so much as a team," he said. "You have to be ready for any scenario and pay attention first start to finish. The target for the coming years is to keep improving the process," he said when asked about last season's semi-final loss to Borussia Dortmund.

That steady evolution was evident in the first leg in London where PSG's compact shape, aggressive pressing and controlled possession frustrated Arsenal's attacking rhythm.

Defender Achraf Hakimi said the team's new-found identity had been key to their run.

The key is to show our personality with and without the ball and press high," Hakimi said. "Arsenal will need to feel that the Parc des Princes is our home."

PSG's only Champions League final appearance ended in defeat by Bayern Munich in 2020, while Arsenal's sole final was in 2006 when they lost to Barcelona in Paris.

"We will have to be good



Paris Saint Germain's Ousmane Dembele during training in Poissy, France, on Tuesday. (Reuters)

as last week, but while many expect the same kind of game, I guarantee you it will be completely different," said Luis Enrique.

According to Uefa statistics, PSG have won 19 of the 19 ties in which they won a first leg away, while Arsenal have never overtaken a home first leg defeat in European competition, losing all five ties. Enrique, however, isn't counting on history ahead of the match at the Parc des Princes.

"We're both used to suffer because our opponents don't have a favourable result," Enrique told reporters.

"We need to match our per-

formance as closely as possible in the first leg to win the return leg and stay true to our idea."

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta, on the other hand, believes that his team needs to be ready to etch their life to reach the Champions League final.

"Excitement, goosebumps, wanting the day to arrive, (the feeling) of being very prepared, very convinced and knowing that the opportunity is to play in a Champions League final," Arteta was quoted as saying by ESPN.

"And when you get to that point, you have to give your life for it."

STATS THE WAY

Head to head:
Matches played: 6, PSG have won 1, Arsenal 2.

Three have ended in draws.

■ Only two teams have reached the Champions League final after losing the first-leg semi-final at home. Ajax beat Panathinaikos in 1995-96 and Tottenham defeated Ajax in 2018-19.

■ Both PSG and Arsenal are bidding to reach their second Champions League final. The French side made it to the final in 2019-20 and the Gunnars in 2005-06.

■ After winning the first leg of a European tie away from home, PSG have been eliminated only once (vs Manchester United in 2018-19). Arsenal have never progressed after losing the first leg at home.

■ This is PSG's fifth Champions League semi-final (win 1, loss 3) and a fourth in six seasons. In 2023-24 they lost 0-1 both away and at home against Borussia Dortmund.

■ This is Arsenal's third Champions League semi-final. They beat Villarreal 1-0 on aggregate in 2005-06 but lost 1-4 again against Manchester United three seasons later.

Source: Uefa

Paris Saint Germain's Ousmane Dembele during training in Poissy, France, on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Arsenal will be happy with the return of midfield Thomas Partey after he missed the first leg through suspension.

For the first leg, such was the shortage of players that Arteta had to name four academy players on the bench. Arsenal still gave PSG a tough fight.

With inputs from Reuters, AP

OTHER RESULTS

● Paris Saint Germain vs Arsenal (12.30am IST Thursday, Live on Sony Ten 2 and Sony LIV)

First leg score: PSG 1 Arsenal 0

France minister apologises:
France's former interior minister Gerald Darmanin has apologised to Liverpool fans for wrongly blaming them for the chaos at the Stade de France during the 2022 Champions League final in Paris.

Darmanin, now serving as the justice minister, admitted

that security arrangements for the final between Liverpool and Real Madrid were inadequate, and that his previous public remarks blaming English fans was a mistake, British media reported on Monday.

Fans were caught in dangerous crowd congestion out-

side the Stade de France before the match, which was delayed for over 30 minutes.

French police were filmed using tear gas on the fans, who complained of heavy-handed treatment as they were herded into pens outside the stadium.

Reuters

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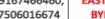
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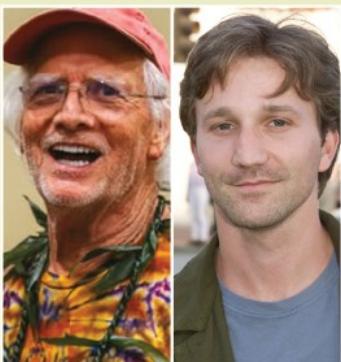
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The Telegraph

Wednesday
7 May 2025

BILL KREUTZMANN, BRECKIN MEYER



This is a great time to get involved in creative or team projects. You might receive an inheritance this year. Do not rush into new things without thinking them through fully. Try to simplify your life as much as you can and get back to the basics instead of getting stressed. If you are single, try and meet new people as a new romance could be coming your way.

— Nita Chhotalal

Instagram



BTS SCENES:
Smiles, stories, and a whole lot of behind-the-scenes love. Uploaded by @kapilsharma (Kapil Sharma)



MIRROR, MIRROR!
Uploaded by @dishapatani (Disha Patani)

TODAY'S TIPS by Nita Chhotalal

ARIES

DO move on from stagnancy
DON'T allow yourself to get stuck with things you do not believe in
EXPECT to link up all the fragments of thoughts which will make it easier for you to get rid of certain tricky situations

TAURUS

DO mend fences and clear old misunderstandings
DON'T be hesitant
EXPECT to get close to someone from whom you have been estranged before

GEMINI

DO take your decision calmly
DON'T confide in someone who does not have your best interest at heart
EXPECT to be sure of the person before you unburden your soul to him or her

CANCER

DO adjust your attitude towards your loved ones
DON'T retaliate
EXPECT to be understanding and accommodating to the needs of others

LEO

DO be courteous and respectful towards the belief of other people
DON'T whine about the hurdles which come across your path
EXPECT to stride across the journey of life with vigour and enthusiasm

VIRGO

DO make new friends and mix with new people
DON'T underestimate your self-worth
EXPECT to impress those around you with your wit and grace

LIBRA

DO question the worthiness of relations
DON'T let your personal problems hamper your progress
EXPECT to sort out your differences if you want to save yourself from some serious trouble

SCORPIO

DO try for cooperation and harmony while tackling any project
DON'T throw your weight around
EXPECT to take the lead and demonstrate your authority

CAPRICORN

DO continue being sincere and hard-working
DON'T lose faith
EXPECT to feel that your performance is affected because things are out of your control

AQUARIUS

DO share your concerns with a friend or a relative
DON'T go back into the past
EXPECT a psychological problem to cause you a lot of discomfort

PISCES

DO re-evaluate your decisions before making them effective
DON'T be judgemental
EXPECT the day to be full of applause and praise for you

Nita Chhotalal is on @Divine Grace - Nita Chhotalal @mysticalguidancebynita

WHATUP

GLIMPSES FROM ESHO HEY BOISHAKH, ROTARY CLUB'S STAR-STUDDED NABABARSHA CELEBRATION

Rotary Club's Esho Hey Boishakh was a slightly delayed yet glamorous welcome of the Bengali New Year. The Pola Baishakh event, held at Urbana recently, was attended by guests such as Babul Supriyo, Isha Saha, and many more. With meaningful *adda*, soulful music and lip-smacking food, the event delivered on all dimensions of a complete Bengali experience in the truest sense. The *adda* sessions, moderated by Arindam Sil, seemed like full-fledged TED Talks on socio-cultural topics, ranging from colonialism in Bengali food to AI in art and music, accompanied by personal reflections from the guests. Spectacular musical and dance performances were peppered throughout the conversations, and the night came to a close with a delightful spread catered by Mitra Cafe and Tiswa's Kitchen.

Highlights from the evening.

Ansh Banerjee (t2 intern)



"Even in tough times, we Bengalis find a way to celebrate. I really enjoyed the *adda*, music and a feast that brought comfort, especially the Mutton Kosha I hadn't had in so long. I wore my favourite blue *mulmul* sari with an orange blouse and matching earrings. It's my *mulmul* sarees and me against this hot and humid weather," said Isha Saha.

The final performance of the evening came from the talented husband-wife duo, Somchanda Bhattacharya and Shubham Banerjee. "I had a wonderful time celebrating Pola Boishakh with Rotary Club members. Although I couldn't celebrate on the 15th, this day compensated for it. I also found the perfect excuse to wear a saree despite the heat — this soft, powder-pink one gifted by my husband was both comfortable and beautiful," said Somchanda.



(L-R) Debasish Sen, Babul Supriyo and Arindam Sil actively participated in the evening's activities. Babul Supriyo sang *Purano shei diner kotha*



BIG SCREEN

ENGLISH

THE LEGEND OF OCHI (U/A): Inox Quest (1.15)

THUNDERBOLTS (U/A): Inox Quest (9, 11.50, 2.40, 5.30, 8.20, 11.10), Inox South City (9.05, 11.55, 2.45, 5.35, 8.25, 11.15), Inox Forum (10.15, 4.20, 7.10, 10), Inox Salt Lake (9.05, 2.45, 8.25, 11.15), Inox Rajarhat (9.10, 2.55, 11.25), Inox Hiland (2.15, 10.45), Inox Hind (10, 6.40), PVR Avani (8pm), PVR Mani Square (9.05, 5.20, 8.10, 11), PVR Diamond Plaza (9.25, 5.20, 11), PVR Uniworld Downtown (11am, 10.30pm), RDB Cinemas (9.15am, 8pm)
UNTIL DAWN (A): Inox Quest (noon)

HINDI

THE BHOOOTII (U/A): Inox Quest (5.10, 10.50), RDB Cinemas (1.50)

GROUND ZERO (U/A): Inox Quest (2.20), Inox South City (noon)

HIT: THE THIRD CASE (A): RDB Cinemas (11.45am)

KESARI CHAPTER 2: THE UNTOLD STORY OF JALLIANWALA BAGH (A): Inox Quest (9.40, 7.55, 9.30), Inox South City (10.10, 6.20, 10.55), Inox Salt Lake (11.55, 3.55, 11.30), Inox Rajarhat (10.05, noon, 8.35, 11.35), Inox Hiland (10.20, 1.10, 9.30), Inox Hind (12.50), PVR Avani (noon, 5.40, 8.35, 11.30), PVR Mani Square (9, 5.35, 11.20), PVR Diamond Plaza (2.45, 11.05), PVR Uniworld Downtown (1.50), RDB Cinemas (5.20, 10.30)

RAID 2 (U/A): Inox Quest (9, 10.30, 11.30, 12.35, 1.30, 2.30, 3.35, 4.30, 5.30, 6.30, 7.30, 8.30, 9.30, 10.30, 11.30), Inox South City (9, 10.10, 11.15, 1.15, 2.15, 3.20, 4.15, 5.15, 7.15, 8.15, 9.15, 10.15, 11.15), Inox Forum (10, 11, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11), Inox Salt Lake (10.30, 11.30, 1.30, 2.30, 4.30, 5.30, 7.30, 8.30, 10.30, 11.30), Inox Rajarhat (9, 10, noon, 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10), Inox Hiland (10, 11, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11), Inox Hind (10.30, 1.30, 3.40, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30, 10.30), Inox Metro (11, 1, 2, 5, 8,



RAID 2

9.35, 11), PVR Avani (9, 10, 11, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11), PVR Mani Square (9.45, 11, 12.45, 2, 3.45, 5, 6.45, 8, 9.45, 11), PVR Diamond Plaza (9, 10, 11, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11), PVR Uniworld Downtown (10, 11, 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11), RDB Cinemas (5.45), SVF Cinemas, Narendrapradip (9, 11.40, 2.20, 5, 7, 40, 10.20), SVF Cinemas, Howrah (9, 11.35, 2.10, 4.45, 7.20, 10), SVF Cinemas, Baruipur Show House (11, 1.45, 4.30, 7.15)

THUNDERBOLTS (U/A): Inox Rajarhat (5.45), Inox Hiland (9.10, 7.55), Inox Metro (10.10, 4), PVR Avani (9.10, 2.25, 10.50), PVR Mani Square (noon), PVR Diamond Plaza (2.30, 8.10), PVR Uniworld Downtown (4.45), RDB Cinemas (2.50)

BENGALI

PURATAWN – THE ANCIENT (U/A): Inox South City (3.05), Inox Salt Lake (3.40), Inox Rajarhat (1pm), Inox Hiland (noon)
SHREEMAN VS SHREEMATI (U/A): Inox Quest (6.35), Inox South City (2.50, 5.30, 8.10), Inox Salt Lake (1pm), Inox Rajarhat (1pm), Inox Hiland (4, 6.45), Inox Metro (6.50), PVR Avani (2.55, 5.15), PVR Mani Square (2.50), PVR Diamond Plaza (noon, 5.35, 8.20), RDB Cinemas (4.30)

TECH**GOOGLE'S NOTEBOOKLM APP IS COMING TO ANDROID AND iOS**

Google's plan to put Gemini in every one of its products is happening at a rapid pace. One AI product that many are looking forward to is NotebookLM, which helps parse documents, videos and more using Google's advanced AI models. It has been available on the web since 2023, but Google recently said it would get an Android app, which is available for pre-install.

NotebookLM aims to help students, professionals, and researchers better understand complex information through features like smart summaries and the ability to ask questions about documents and other materials. It even lets you generate AI podcasts, called Audio Overviews, to make it easier to digest complex topics.

At the moment, NotebookLM exists on a website. You can visit it on your phone, but the interface is not user-friendly compared to the desktop version. The mobile app will change that. The app is expected to be released at Google I/O in late May but you can pre-register to be notified when the download is live.

NotebookLM banks on the same technology as Google's other chatbots and AI projects, but instead of a general purpose robot, NotebookLM is focused on documents you upload. It can assimilate text files, websites, and videos, including multiple files and source types for a single agent. There is a context window of 500,000 tokens and supports document uploads as large as 200MB. Google says this creates a queryable "AI expert" that can answer detailed questions and discuss ideas based on the source data.

According to screenshots on the app listings, the dedicated app will allow users to create new notebooks and view the ones they have already created. They can also upload new sources from their device and view the ones they have already uploaded in each of the notebooks.

Besides mobile, the apps will be available on iPads and tablets, where you'll have a bigger screen to multitask.

Mathures Paul

Google's NotebookLM app is expected to be released at Google I/O in late May, but you can pre-register to be notified when the download is live

APPLE VISION PRO GETS ITS FIRST FEATURE FILM WITH BONO TAKING THE STAGE

Apple Vision Pro, the spatial computing headset, is getting its first full-length immersive film — *Bono: Stories of Surrender*, a concert-style "documentary event". But wipe those tears, it will also be available on Apple TV+.

Based on his memoir, it uses 180-degree video capture in 8K resolution, aiming to create a detailed visual experience. Apple's Spatial Audio technology is also used, making sounds appear to come from specific points around the listener to increase the feeling that you are there during the performance.

The film has been in the making for sometime. During the pandemic, Bono spent time with U2 member The Edge, reworking and re-recording a catalogue of the band's greatest hits for an album titled *Songs of Surrender*, which was released in March 2023. The 40-track LP was accompanied by a documentary titled *Bono & The Edge: A Sort of Homecoming*, as well as Bono's memoir, *Surrender: 40 Songs, One Story*.

The singer continues his journey in *Bono: Stories of Surrender*. The Apple documentary, directed in black-and-white by Andrew Dominik and it will have its world premiere at Cannes Film Festival later this month.

Apple has said in a statement: "[Bono] pulls back the curtain on a remarkable



life and the family, friends, and faith that have challenged and sustained him, revealing personal stories about his journey as a son, father, husband, activist and rockstar. Along with never-before-seen, exclusive footage from the Beacon Theatre shows, the film features Bono performing many of the iconic U2 songs that have shaped his life and legacy."

Bono: Stories of Surrender will arrive on Apple TV+ on May 30 and simultaneously be available in Apple Immersive Video for Vision Pro users. An abridged and updated edition of Bono's memoir will be released in conjunction with the documentary.

Mathures Paul

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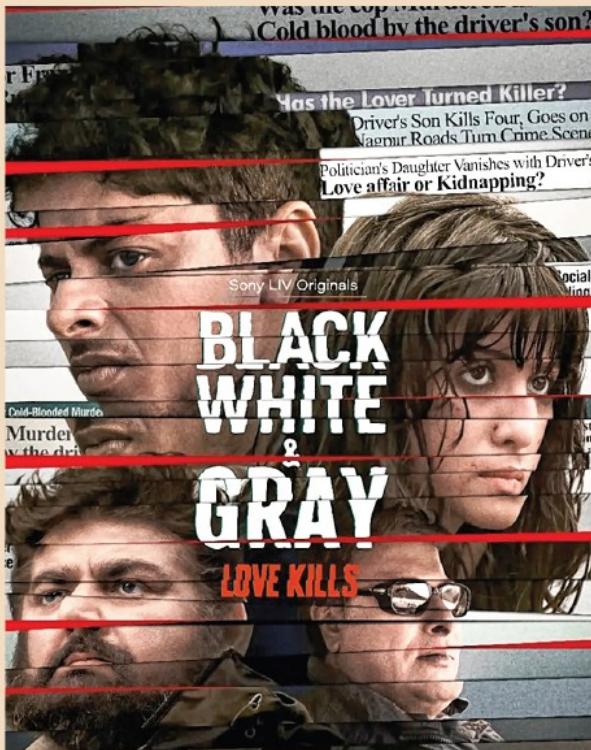
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HAPPY GUESTS

BLACK WHITE & GRAY IS AVANT-GARDE AND WILDLY ORIGINAL

Dizzying inventiveness — both of the literal and metaphorical variety—is at the heart of *Black White & Gray*. Distinguished by a daring meta-narrative which turns the so-called tenets of the true-crime genre on its head, this six-part SonyLIV series is perhaps the most ingenious piece of writing seen on Indian screens in a while.

Co-created by Pushkar Mahabal and Hemal Thakkar, with the former also doubling as director, *Black White & Gray* — with the title delving into the good, the evil and, more importantly, the in-between — focuses on the classic poor boy-rich girl trope, but builds a storytelling technique around it that keeps you on the edge of your seat. There are two intertwined strands: a mockumentary about a crime that is supposed to be real, and the restaging of the crime. Both are fictional, but what hits hard is that all of it could well be true.

The boy (played by Mayur More) and the girl (Palak Jaiswal) are not named, which is just as well because their circumstances — though extraordinary — are not alien to frequent newspaper



Black White & Gray is streaming on SonyLIV

headlines. Not naming them says more about socio-economic politics and caste chasm than doing so would have, with *Black White & Gray* emerging as a sharp and on-point commentary on what divides India today.

Living in Nagpur, she is the daughter of a powerful politician, while he is the son of the driver who has been driving her father around for decades. It is a prickly situation and what kicks off as a midnight no-strings-attached romp in a hotel room quickly escalates into a multiple murder case. The boy is the accused, including being named as the killer of the girl (no spoiler, there is much more to this). His other ‘victims’ include a village boy, a cab driver and an off-duty cop (played by actor-filmmaker Tigmanshu Dhulia). Hot on his heels is a bounty hunter (Deven Bhojani), along with a police force, which at the behest of the politician, is baying for the boy’s blood.

The stakes rise with every twist and turn and so does your involvement in the narrative, with the format shifting between the dramatisation of the crime(s), which is, of course, fictional; the talking heads playback, which is

also fictional, marking a significant departure from a true-crime documentary, and the employment of multiple unreliable narrators, each of which has different interpretations and reinterpretations of what happened over the course of a few nights.

Black White & Gray talks about confirmation bias, gender inequity and the abuse of power. Much of it is not on the nose, but what is crudely executed — which is exactly what the script demanded — is the role of a certain section of the media as hungry vultures, perpetually ready as it is to peddle lies and manipulate many a truth. The fact that the boy chooses to tell his side of the story to a foreign YouTuber/self-styled journalist — who he believes is the only one who will present his story without blemish — says a lot about the kind of faith we have on our media now.

Black White & Gray ends on a tenuous note that makes you instantly rethink all that you have watched — and believed — in the last three hours. That’s the mark of great storytelling.

Priyanka Roy

t2 CAUGHT UP WITH MAYUR MORE AND PALAK JAISWAL, THE LEAD PAIR OF *BLACK WHITE & GRAY*, FOR A CHAT

More than the story, what was your reaction when you were told about the format of *Black White & Gray*?

Palak Jaiswal: It is a mockumentary of sorts and that hooked me. Also, the screenplay is written in such a way that a lot of events happen at the same time, but it never feels like chaos. The episodes are mounted in such a compelling manner that you can’t help but go from one to the next, often finishing the series in one setting.

When I read the script for the first time, my mind was blown because nothing that I expected was happening... it was all so unpredictable. It constantly keeps you on the edge.

Mayur More: When Pushkar (Mahabal, co-creator and director), told me the story, I was dumbfounded because I had never seen or heard anything like this. I was like: ‘Wow, this guy wants to make something very special and let me support him.’ I got the narration just two days before shooting... till then I didn’t know what was happening! So all my reactions on set — and in the series — are automatically of surprise! (Laughs)

These are ordinary people caught in very extraordinary circumstances. How did you build empathy and relatability with them?

Mayur: What was constant on my mind was that if such a thing happened to me in life, how would I react. I just did another crime show before this and that gave me some insight into the psyche of a killer, particularly things like what pushes a man to pull the trigger and kill another man? It is scary and fascinating.

Palak: Sometimes, certain situations happen



Mayur More and Palak Jaiswal in the series

in life that push one to the extreme, but what these two characters have to go through is unimaginable. This is a mockumentary, it is a fictionally written story but it is shot in a documentary format telling people that it has happened in real life... but it is a fictional story! It is complicated in form and yet, I feel that the girl I play is relatable in many ways... she lives a life that many girls in our country

live. She also has a moral compass and that comes into play several times, forcing her to make a decision. Very few people have the intent to kill. But circumstances in life push her into it, and that could happen to anyone.

Given the format, were the challenges of filming more mental than physical?

Mayur: It was challenging in all aspects — mentally, physically, emotionally. The emotional scenes did take a toll. In the beginning, we were going to shoot it in a linear fashion, and I was happy that I could take it one day at a time. But then, the decision was made to shoot non-linear and I got quite nervous because I had already prepped to do things in a certain way. Also, I had only one or two takes to do some scenes and that brought on added pressure. But in hindsight, it worked out well.

The weather was challenging. It was hot in Nagpur and we had to run around a lot. Then we shifted to Uttarakhand, and it was very cold there, with scenes that demanded we jump into ice-cold water. It was tough but I had fun because I got a chance to do something which I enjoy.

Palak: For me, the challenge began from the script level. I had to figure out this girl, her mental make-up and motivations. At every bend, the boy and girl have two choices and it was important for me to gauge why she was going with one choice over another.

We shot a lot at midnight and early mornings. Our sleep schedules had gone for a toss. On one occasion, my stunt double couldn’t perform a certain stunt and I volunteered to do it myself. I ended up doing quite a few stunts myself. For my debut project, this was as demanding, but also as creatively satisfying, as it could be. **Mayur:** Maintaining continuity was a challenge. We have shot the entire series wearing one set of clothes.

Priyanka Roy

COMING UP

t2

What: Comedy Night Live in association with t2
Where: Kala Mandir
When: Today, 6.30pm onwards
Expect: Anamika Kala Sangam will present Comedy Night Live in Calcutta for the first time. There is the promise of an unforgettable evening of laughter and entertainment. The star-studded lineup features some of India's most loved comedians, including the



hilarious Ali Asgar, mimicry genius Sanket Bhosale, the lively duo Tannaz and Bakhtiyar Irani, and the popular twin entertainers Chinki-Minki. Adding spice to the event will be actor Nusrat Jahan, who will join in for a "roasting" segment. The one-of-a-kind comedy extravaganza brings together a mix of stand-up, mimicry and banter, making it a must-attend event. Anamika Kala Sangam's attempt to bring such high-profile entertainment

to the city reflects its commitment to promoting art and culture. Get ready for a night packed with fun, laughter and memories.

Organiser speak: "We are thrilled to host Comedy Night Live, curated by Anamika Kala Sangam, featuring top comedians of the country. We are bringing this first-of-its-kind experience to Calcutta," said Sanjay Agarwal, chairman of the organising committee of Anamika Kala Sangam.

The Telegraph CLASSIFIED *Whats On!* WednesDélite

PROPERTY

FLAT PURCHASE/SALE

MURTHY कल्पनातार क्यानेल स्ट्राइप्टे 2 बेडरमर्से सेमी-फार्मिंट फ्लॉट (902 वर्षाहुत) lift ओर गरेज सह विक्रय। प्रिंटिंग बेडरमर्से सलैंग वाखरम, द्वां काम डाइनिंग, राशावर और बारादा। मृद्दु 85 लक्ष। योगायोग 9831221093 DR150070RR15007 00117299

2 BHK Flat sale near Behala Bazar Metro Station. Mob: 9051887001. AG27AGG278 00117128

SALE 650 Sqft. new furnished flat just opposite Jadavpur KPC hospital. 7003538578 DR150070RR15007 00115118

At Nakta spacious 3 bed room South facing flat for sale. 9007363756/ 9038023183 00117116

4 Rooms Ground floor Flat is for Sale in Salt Lake. Broker Excuse. Contact-9002566169 AP217AP217 00117059

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1084 sqft 2bhk flat for sale. 3rd floor. With lift. Airport 2.5 No. Gate, near metro. Rs. 34 lac. M: 9836858133 DR150070RR15007 00116115

नगरपालिका मेंटो 1BHK 22 लाख, 2BHK 38 लाख, 3BHK 57 लाख स्पेशल फ्लॉट बेटी फ्लॉट निकी। मेट्रो/एक्सप्रोट्रो 5 मिं 9038575101 /70028184 00116972

AN218ANN2811 00116972

IN Sherwood Estate, नरेश्वर 2BHK and 3BHK Flats available for sale with car parking. For details, Contact: 98310-05275 AN123ANN1129 00117472

D.H Road सलैंग बेहाला सिल्पिभार एक्टी नक्सा 2 BHK 809 Sqft. Flat विक्रय आছे। 1st Floor With Garage - 46 Lac. Contact: 9163457800 DR150070RR15007 00116805

2 BHK Flat for Sale - Just 250 meters from Bansdroni Metro Station Spacious and well-located For details, contact: 9102298390 AP151AFAF510 00117194

3BHK - 1541 Sqft Flat बाटोउटीर एक कमरोंसे विक्रि ट्रॉप छोड़े, फार्मिंटा कार्डर्ड गढ़ि परिवर्ति। साथे ट्रॉप फ्लॉट एसि। १० लक्ष टाका। Ph: ९८००३०२९५५ 00117469

AN114BANN1129 00117469

তারামীর্ত मাঝের মধ্যের কাছে দ্বারকা নদীর ধারে 400 ফ্লোর কমপ্লেক্সে পার্কিং/বাগান/কর্মসূচি হল মুক্ত রেডি Flat 9L থেকে শুরু। Bank মোহর হবে 9836345566/ 6291254909 00117246

ই.এম. বাইপাস মেট্রো ক্যাশ এন্ট্রি থেকে ৪৫ম হাটাপথে পূর্বলালোকে 1150 sqft 2T 3BHK flat বাসানা, গ্রানাইজেশন 1st/3rd floor এ ৭০ লাখ ও 65 লাখে বিক্রয়। দালাল নয়। 9930028223 00117548

AN121BANN1128 00117548

SALE: Spacious/ big 3-BHK flat, 2-Toilets, Spacious open Veranda, 1230 sqft carpet area, (Super-built area- 1499 sqft), 3rd floor- No lift, 3-sides open + own Garage - Expected Price- Rs. 50 lacs (Negotiable), 2-minutes walk from Masterda Surya Sen Metro Station, near Bansdroni Market, 334 NSC Bose Rd, KolKata- 700047 (M) 9313786167/ 9339193134. DR150070RR15007 00117255

SELIOPRE

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AG53AGG278 00116988

বাধাতীনি খান ঠাকুর অঞ্চলের পিছনে 2BHK 1স্ট ফ্লোর, ২বাণী ১বাণী, খান ঠাকুর ঘর-ভাইরিং, গ্রানেজ নেই, 2023 এ তৈরি, ক্ষেত্র ক্ষেত্র ২71, 9748827830 00117249

AG73AGG278 00117249

SALE 1068 sqft buildup 2BHK with 2 bath Vastu approved Flat on 4th floor+ Carpark in Aasha Appts at Tollygunge Phari. 9831173750 00117476

AN214ANN1285 00117476

BDAH Sakhherbazar 3BHK 1070 Sqft Flat Marble flr, 6ys used, 1st flr, Lift, on 30ft Road, Garage, 43 Lakh, No Broker M: 9874848504 00116515

DR150070RR15007 00116515

SALE 3 room S&E open, 3rd floor, 1300sqft, 32yr, Lift, DG, Carpark, Almira, Rasbehari Avenue, Triangular Park, 2.30 Cr, 9830290305 00116543

AG51AGG278 00116543

NEAR R Bharati Univ. 4 minute walk from BT Rd, 2nd flr s/E Corner Marble flr/lift 855 sqft approx SBU @ 5700/- per sqft M: 9888655930 00116925

AG52AGG278 00116925

SALE 3 room S&E open, 3rd floor, 1300sqft, 32yr, Lift, DG, Carpark, Almira, Rasbehari Avenue, Triangular Park, 2.30 Cr, 9830290305 00116543

AG53AGG278 00116543

NEAR R Bharati Univ. 4 minute walk from BT Rd, 2nd flr s/E Corner Marble flr/lift 855 sqft approx SBU @ 5700/- per sqft M: 9888655930 00116925

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উত্তরপাড়া লোকেল স্ট্রাইটে 1st flr এ 2BHK 900 Sq.Ft. ঘরোঁ সহ 36 লাখ ও 2nd flr. এ 2BHK 80 Sq.Ft. flr. flat Ready to move 32 লাখ 9830450513 00117553

AG62AGG278 00117553

বারামাত টেলি বাসস্টপ বাজার হেল্পেন্টার বান্ধ নপাড়া পি নিকট 1250/Flat রিসেল মূল 37.1 ৩ বেড বাথ ভাইরিং বালকনি পূর্বে কৃষ্ণপুর গেট M: 7595994214. 00116336

ANH4ANN1484 00116336

1BHK, 503 sqft., 2nd Flr, with lift, Merlin flat at sibrampur near Behala chowrasta, 16 L, resale, M: 9780195954/ 9123639763. (8-11 pm) DR150070RR15007 00116888

AG55AGG278 00116888

READY to Move flat for sale at New Town AA - 2C, 1000 sqft East Facing, 1st Floor 2BHK with Puja Room @ 49.5L. Call 6290033650, 8910045447 00117254

AG56AGG278 00117254

কল্যাণী A-2-A-9 D-19/11 (A Block) B-9 B-10 B-12 B-15 & 2BHK Ready to move Flat Booking সম্পর্ক স Enterprice Developer M-7003399113/ 8100091665 00117543

AG57AGG278 00117543

SALE the bazar মেট্রো স্টেশনের ধারে জেমস লঙ্ঘ সরনীর ওপর PNB Bank, Bazar, Park সলৈংগ South Facing 3 Side Open Silpara, Kol-8 Basket মাটের পামে 2nd floor এ Flat বিক্রয় আছে। 9748604015 00116773

DR150070RR15007 00116773

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AG58AGG278 00117254

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AG59AGG278 00117543

NEW Building Ready to Move in 2BHK Flat for Sale @60Lacs+Gst, Car Parking Extra at Fern Road Ballygunge, M-8274870570 9674109112 00116322

DR150070RR15007 00116322

বেহালা খানা থেকে হাটাপথে ৮ মিলি 3BHK রিসেল ফ্লোর ১০০ sqft বড় বারাদা, ভাইরিং, বাথরুম। সলৈংগ প্যারেজ ১৫৫ sqft এক্সেস বিক্রয়। দাম ২৬৫+৭ লক্ষ। M: 83348 11941 00116161

DR150070RR15007 00116161

NEW Flats near Tollygunge Metro on Raja Ram Mohan Roy Road, Muchipara, 2 BHK 2 Toilets. No GST, CC received. Loan available. 1000 sqft approx. Rs. 28 to 35 lakhs. M: 9830074300. DR150070RR15007 00117344

Jodhpur Park Prime location spacious 4 BHK, 4 toilets under construction flat with two covered car parking for sale. Handover coming October. 9830929066. DR150070RR15007 00117541

AG51AGG278 00117541

FLAT on Belgharia Exp. way, KV-Ph-II Birati D-Type marble floor 1510 sqft 4 BHK, 4 Balcony, 4 bath, 1 Car Park, 5th flr. lift, vacant - Secured Rs. 85 Lakh. M: 9874746447/ 9962595763 00117279

AG62AGG278 00117279

2BHK+1 Study room furnished flat sale at 60 Lakh, DH Road near Sakhherbazar Metro. 986 sqft, 3rd floor, Lift, Car park. 8335066975 00117042

AG63AGG278 00117042

2BHK+1 Study room furnished flat sale at 60 Lakh, DH Road near Sakhherbazar Metro. 986 sqft, 3rd floor, Lift, Car park. 8335066975 00117042

AG64AGG278 00117042

মন্দদম Jn. Rly Station কাছে পর্যবেক্ষণ ক্ষমতা 3% কাটা বাড়ি নির্মাণ প্রক্রিয়া ক্ষেত্রে পার্কিং সলৈংগ 10 মিটার দূরতে ২কাটা সম্পূর্ণ মার্কেটের বিল্ডিং। ১টি কর্ম ও বাথ ঠাকুরের গ্রানেজ সহ 65 লাখে বিক্রয়। AG76AGG67 00117454

শান্তিগঞ্জ স্টেশন বাজার ব্যাক হস্পিটল 10 মিটার দূরতে ২কাটা সম্পূর্ণ মার্কেটের বিল্ডিং। ১টি কর্ম ও বাথ ঠাকুরের গ্রানেজ সহ 65 লাখে বিক্রয়। AG77AGG67 00117454

মন্দদম পুরুষ মেট্রো স্টেশন থেকে 2 মিটিং হাটা দূরতে ১০ মিট রাস্তায় ৩ কাটা জমিতে এক্সেস বাইরিং সেলো বাড়ি বিক্রয়। ১টি কর্ম ও বাথ ঠাকুরের গ্রানেজ সহ 28 লাখ টাকা প্রতি কাটা বাড়ি নির্মাণ প্রক্রিয়া। AG78AGG67 00117454

ঠাকুরপুর মেট্রো স্টেশন থেকে 2 মিটিং হাটা দূরতে ১০ মিট রাস্তায় ৩ কাটা জমিতে এক্সেস বাইরিং সেলো বাড়ি বিক্রয়। ১টি কর্ম ও বাথ ঠাকুরের গ্রানেজ সহ 28 লাখ টাকা প্রতি কাটা বাড়ি নির্মাণ প্রক্রিয়া। AG79AGG67 00117454

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SALE one Delux Flat Overlooking Parkcirus Donbosco School 3BHK with attach bat all facilities ready to occupy contact- 9330159360, 03322308321 DR150070RR15007 00116932

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AAMAR BOSS STAR RAKHEE SHARES ANECDOTES OF DILIP KUMAR, AMITABH BACHCHAN AND AMJAD KHAN AS SHIBOPROSAD MUKHERJEE TURNS INTERVIEWER FOR t2

Nandita Roy and Shiboprosad Mukherjee's upcoming film *Amar Boss* has sparked anticipation and excitement among fans, as they eagerly wait for the release of the film in theatres on May 9. One of the highlights of *Amar Boss* is the presence of Rakhee, who returns to films after 22 years. Having enjoyed a dazzlingly successful career of charming performances across genres, Rakhee plays a caring mother to her devoted son (played by Shiboprosad) in the mother-son relationship film. Recently, Rakhee and Shiboprosad got together for a t2 chat at Taj Bengal. Excerpts.

Shiboprosad: Through this conversation, I would like you to share some rare anecdotes from the past. You had once shared a story of Dilip Kumar rustling up an omelette on the road during the shoot of *Shakti*.

Rakhee: No, not an omelette. Dilip Saab would arrive on the set and ask for the pages of his dialogue. He carried an ink pen and would take the sheaf of papers and go sit underneath a tree. One day, I saw him slapping himself. He was reprimanding himself. "You don't remember your lines," he was telling himself.

One day, as we were travelling to a location for the shoot, he told us to stop and follow him. Everyone from the unit followed him to a shop by the roadside. "How are you, Bhatty?" he asked the shopkeeper. Once the shopkeeper realised who he was speaking to, he was flabbergasted. I cannot conjure up that expression here. "Do you have a saucepan?" Dilip Saab asked him. "Yes," he said. "Do you have a brick?" The shopkeeper said that he can get it for him. "Give me a saucepan, water and a brick," Dilip Saab told him. Then we understood the whole story. Dilip Saab had already packed 20 kgs of biryani in the cars for everyone from the unit. But that biryani did not have eggs in it. So he decided to rustle up boiled eggs by the roadside.

I remember another incident where the director Ramesh Sippy wasn't satisfied with one of the scenes for a romantic song... Dilip Saab was supposed to turn in a certain way... and he made Dilip Saab give retakes of that shot 27 times to get it right. "You are looking like Dilip Kumar and not the character," said Sippy.

Shiboprosad: You had fallen off a horse once...

Rakhee: Since I did not want a 'duplicate' to do that scene. I wanted to do it on my own. I was



Rakhee and Shiboprosad Mukherjee

a perfectionist. You see this mark on my forehead? I got it during the shoot of a Dulal Guha film. I believe that to gain something, you have to give. Gains often come with sacrifices.

Shiboprosad: You had worked with Amitabh Bachchan in quite a few films. How did you develop that chemistry? Tell us about the jacket episode!

Rakhee: This was years before Amitabh Bachchan became the Amitabh Bachchan. I was shooting for a film directed by Lekh Tandon and Amitabh had come to the shoot with his friends. We had planned to go to Agra. Amitabh said that he would also come along with us. We all got into the Ambassadors. It was winter and suddenly we were hit with a foul smell. We all tried to figure out the source of that smell and finally realised it was coming from his jacket. He told us that someone had got the jacket for him from Kabul. We doused the jacket with all the perfumes we could get our hands on.

Shiboprosad: He would call you Bourani.

Rakhee: Yes, that is because of Jaya (Bachchan)... Jaya would call me Bourani. I never thought of him as my hero... and because of that our chemistry developed.

Shiboprosad: When I first met you to narrate the story of *Amar Boss*,

you had told me then that you had seen our films and your favourite film is *Haamti*.

Rakhee: Yes, because the story was beautiful. Many years ago, the film *Lalu Bhulu* was made for children. But then people stopped making children's films. I really liked the subject of *Haamti*... and I feel you should make the film in Hindi.

Shiboprosad: You had told me then that if we offer you a script which has a heart-touching, sweet subject and you like it, then



you'll act in our film. You had told me that it had to be a bound script and that I had to go to Bombay and narrate it to you there.

Rakhee: Shibu has this brightness in his eyes! They speak volumes. I had seen Shibu act in *Haamti* and then I came up with the suggestion that he play the role of my

son in *Amar Boss*. The lullaby we shot for rings so true in the film.

Shiboprosad: How was your experience working with Nandita Roy?

Rakhee: She has that hint of a smile at the corner of her mouth... and that's how we would understand that the scene had come out well.

Shiboprosad: In the film, you are our boss!

Incidentally, (actor) Amjad Khan would call you: 'Teen foot ka Dada.'

Rakhee: Amjad was a very learned man, a thorough gentleman... but after *Sholay*, his image went through a complete transformation. Kids were scared of him. I had done many films with him. Things got to such a stage that he faced problems while trying to get his daughter admitted to a school. He then came to me and told me the situation and then I had a word with the principal, who had harboured this wrong notion about him, which was built around his public image post *Sholay*. "I told her that he (Amjad) was a thorough gentleman."

Shiboprosad: Who is your closest friend in the film industry? We hear that it is Salim Khan.

Rakhee: Gulzar, Salim and Javed (Akhtar) wrote scripts for the productions of GP Sippy. I have known Salim since then. I have seen Salman Khan and his brothers since they were kids. Talking about the Salim-Javed screenplays, Javed would write all the witty lines. And as an actor, I would always focus on the scripts.

Shiboprosad: Give us the names of a few eateries in Calcutta which you would like to visit.

Rakhee: Radhu Babu's shop, Chung Wah, Waldorf... we would enjoy the cutlet from a coffee shop... I can't remember the name. Also, the *beguni* and *phuluri* from a sweet shop in Dum Dum.

Shiboprosad: *Amar Boss* has a connection with Sukumar Ray. When I had called you for your home address, you had recited a poem. Rakhee: (Starts laughing).

A moment from *Amar Boss*, which releases in theatres on May 9



Arindam Chatterjee
Picture: Subhadip Basak

CAMPUS

XAVIER'S COMMERCE SOCIETY CELEBRATES 17TH EDITION OF INSIGNIA WITH POMP AND SPLENDOUR, WITH THE TELEGRAPH



Team XCS posed for a group picture with comedian Harsh Gujral on the first day.



The inaugural ceremony was graced by Rev. Fr. Dominic Savio, SJ, principal of St. Xavier's College (Calcutta); Rev. Fr. Joseph Kulandai, SJ, vice-principal of department of commerce (Morning); and Rev. Fr. Peter Arockiam, SJ, vice-principal of department of commerce (Evening). Alongside student representative Riya Kedia, they lit the ceremonial lamp, officially marking the commencement of the fest.



Moderated by Kushal Jindal and Pratham V. Shah, the entrepreneurship event's 'Gilded Gamble' round saw Priyanshu Saraf and Raunak Khetan from St. Xavier's College emerge victorious with sharp strategy and creativity.

The commerce society of St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata, unfurled an engaging chapter of ambition and strategy with the 17th edition of Insignia 2025, in association with The Telegraph. Themed 'Reign of Resurgence', the national-level management fest, was held across

three days at the college campus, recently. With the college campus decked out keeping the theme of grandeur and imperial France in mind, the event witnessed participation of students from across India, including Shri Ram College of Commerce, Hansraj College, Master's Union, Bhawanipur Education Society

College, J.D. Birla Institute, Scottish Church College and more. From intense boardroom battles to spontaneous wit on stage, the fest was a confluence of intellect, creativity and camaraderie. Celebrity guest Harsh Gujral crowned the fest with his comic brilliance. Glimpes.



On the first day, moderator Yug Patwari addressed participants of the event named Contingent, where students segregated themselves into groups as per their choice in different departments, like entrepreneurship, marketing or finance, and the game was conducted simultaneously in different departments. Students of Master's Union, a B-school in Haryana, delivered an outstanding performance to claim victory.



One of the highlights, the Best Manager competition featured a rigorous three-round selection process, testing managerial skills, strategy and problem-solving, and concluded with a challenging stress interview by industry professionals. After a fiercely competitive series of rounds, Shaurya Dalal from Shri Ram College of Commerce emerged winner of the best manager competition, demonstrating exceptional prowess in all three rounds.

The auction segment of Public and International Relations event saw participants showcase sharp strategy. Suhas Pulluru and Manraj Singh Bhullar from team Master's Union emerged victorious.

Joint secretaries of XCS Hemaansh Mohta (left) and Devansh Jogani.



"At Xavier's Commerce Society, we strive to create a platform where ideas meet execution, where learning goes beyond textbooks. Insignia brings together the brightest minds to push boundaries and redefine excellence in commerce and management," said Devansh. Hemaansh added: "In XCS, we unlock potential and grow together."

Shreyassee Dutta (t2 intern)
Pictures courtesy: XCS



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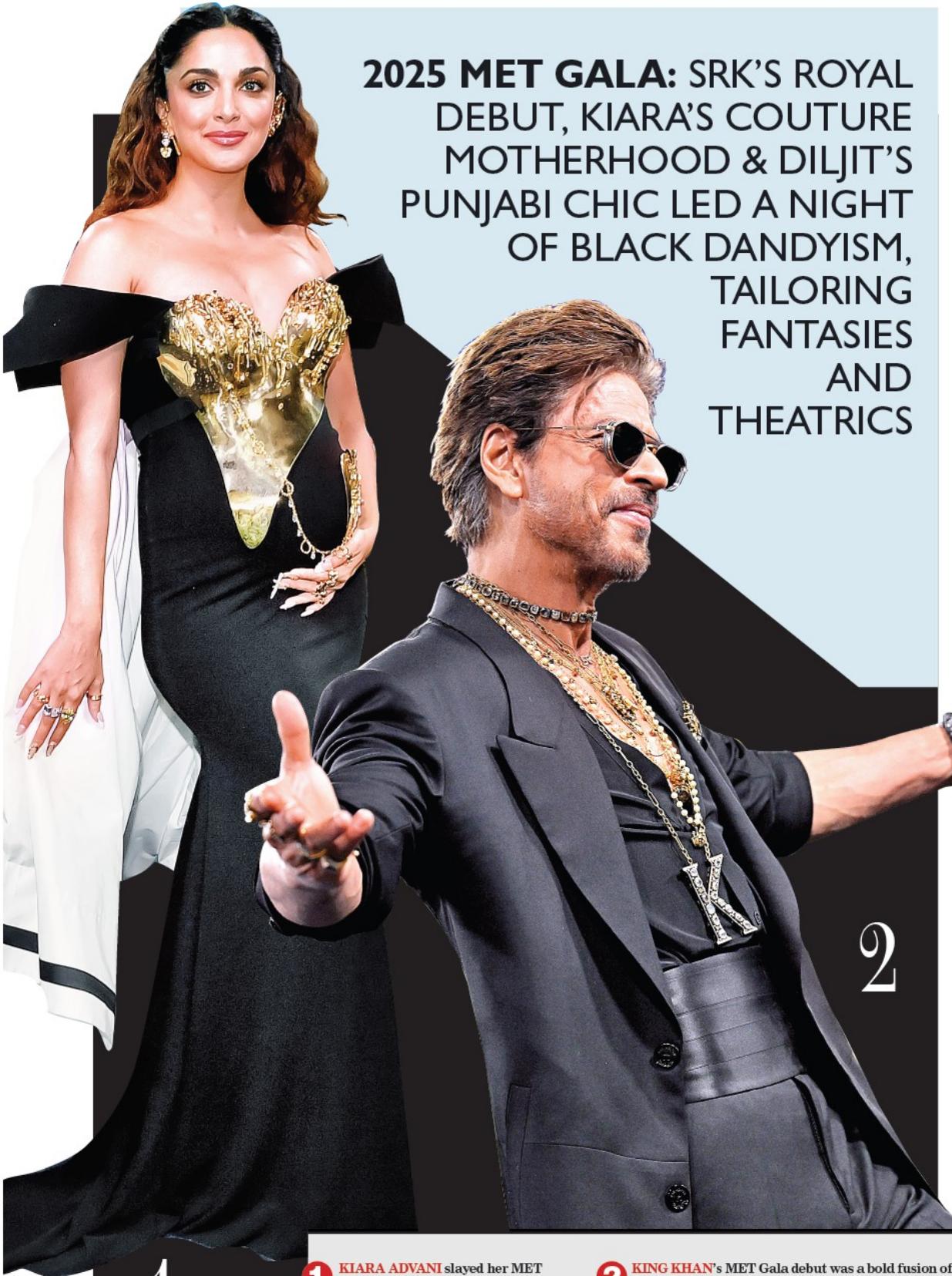


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1

1 **KIARA ADVANI** slayed her MET Gala debut in a jaw-dropping Gaurav Gupta gown, celebrating motherhood and transformation. The sculpted gold breastplate, with its striking umbilical cord detailing, symbolized both defiance and legacy. Paired with a dramatic white cape that echoed André Leon Talley's bold style, Kiara's look was a powerful narrative of strength, femininity, and personal evolution.

2 **KING KHAN**'s MET Gala debut was a bold fusion of heritage and maximalism. Striking his signature pose at the blue carpet in his floor-length Tasmanian wool coat, with exaggerated peak lapels and monogrammed Japanese horn buttons, SRK radiated old-world sophistication in Sabyasachi. Tailored wool trousers and a pleated cummerbund completed the look. The Bengal Tiger Head Cane, crafted in 18k gold and encrusted with sapphires and diamonds, was a statement of cultural pride. Custom necklaces, stacked rings, and bracelets added opulence, while gold-rimmed sunglasses and immaculate hair finished off his regal, powerful ensemble.

3 Embroidered Gurmukhi on his cape as **DILJIT DOSA**'s debut. In a custom Prabha, he embodied regal splendour, Bhupinder Singh's grand gold embroidery, and the white Golecha jewellery, and bespoke Cartier-inspired cultural pride. A fearless Asian heritage, Diljit's look with bold elegance and s

2025 MET GALA: SRK'S ROYAL DEBUT, KIARA'S COUTURE MOTHERHOOD & DILJIT'S PUNJABI CHIC LED A NIGHT OF BLACK DANDYISM, TAILORING FANTASIES AND THEATRICS

Shah Rukh Khan colonised the MET Gala, sporting a Sabyasachi tuxedo-coat so opulent, it seemed capable of rewriting global economies. Making history as the first male Bollywood actor to step onto the iconic carpet, King Khan approached the evening with the kind of grace that suggested he was already ruling New York City. With a diamond-studded tiger cane and the aura of royalty, SRK turned the 'Superfine: Tailoring Black Style' theme of MET Gala 2025 into pure South Asian swagger — think vintage Calcutta darbar meets Harlem Renaissance drip. Shah Rukh didn't walk the carpet. He conquered it.

This year's co-chairs of 'fashion's biggest night' were Colman Domingo, Lewis Hamilton, A\$AP Rocky, Pharrell Williams, and, of course, MET Gala matriarch, Anna Wintour. LeBron James was an honorary chair but couldn't attend due to a knee injury. There's also a host committee made up of 25 other stars.

The exhibition was inspired by the concept of Black dandyism, a style that reclaims and celebrates the history and transformation of Black fashion.

Rooted in the experiences of the African diaspora, the theme highlighted the powerful intersection of fashion, identity, and autonomy, showcasing how Black individuals have evolved from being stylised as symbols of wealth to becoming global trendsetters in their own right.

Kiara Advani debuted at the MET Gala in a Gaurav Gupta creation titled *Bravehearts*. Crafted to honour the maternal form, her look featured a metallic breastplate shaped like a heart and a sinuous train that symbolised an umbilical cord. The silhouette whispered futuristic mummy-core. Pregnancy

1

couture has officially entered the MET chat, and Kiara was not the only participant. But she was, by far, its most glowing member.

And then "Punjabi *aa gaye oyel!*" Diljit Dosanjh waltzed in, royal as ever, in a white Prabal Gurung number embroidered with Gurmukhi calligraphy. With heirloom-inspired jewels stacked on his fingers and that signature turban tilt, Diljit channelled Sikh royalty with a smirk and a wink, in the way only he can.

MET Gala veteran Priyanka Chopra Jonas kept it easy in Balmain polkas, while husband Nick Jonas swooned over her, helping her with her dress and her huge hat.

Our desi couturiers weren't just background credits. Sabyasachi Mukherjee and Manish Malhotra had an undeniable presence on the carpet, dressing stars from Bollywood royalty to international glamazons. MM

debuted at the MET too while dressing several attendees.

Natasha Poonawalla was, as expected, a walking editorial — corseted, bejewelled and over-the-top, while paying homage to the Parsi side of her family. Isha Ambani pulled off an Anamika Khanna number but the highlight was her borrowed heirloom jewellery from mum Nita Ambani.

It was an evening drenched in hues of blacks, whites and greys. The trends were loud and deliberate: pinstripes, wide-brimmed hats, hip-hugging skirts, tuxedo gowns, textual elements and dandy-inspired maximalism. Think Josephine Baker meets Andre Leon Talley in a Harlem speakeasy. From Kiara Advani's umbilical cord-feature to Colman Domingo's pleated cape tribute, the night was dripping in homage and haute.

In the end, 'Superfine: Tailoring Black Style' wasn't just a theme. It was a revolution in satin lapels and ancestral memory, and this year, the MET didn't whisper fashion — it roared.



3

4 **MANISH MALHOTRA** cut a sleek silhouette as he became the second Indian couturier to hit the MET Gala red carpet after Sabyasachi. He owned the night with a daring fusion of Indian opulence and global edge. A sharply cut white shirt, sleek black trousers, and a gilded waistcoat were topped with a cape dripping in gold threadwork. Symbolic brooches — a tiger and an elephant — while emeralds sparkled like they knew their worth. The ensemble was drenched with Indian embroidery with a signatory MM flare.

4

i letters shone proudly on ANJH made his MET Gala debut, evoking Maharaja deur. A white turban, intricate sweeping cape set the tone, including a ceremonial sword inspired necklace, added layers of mix of dandism and South look redefined masculinity striking detail.



5 **PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS**'s 2025 Met Gala look is a study in elegance, but it feels somewhat restrained for the biggest fashion night. The polka-dotted Balmain dress and the emerald Bvlgari necklace are standout elements. The wide-brimmed hat and gloves nod to dandism, but they don't quite elevate the ensemble beyond the expected. Though beautiful, it feels safe — not quite pushing boundaries as one might hope on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum.

5

6 Apart from dressing Shah Rukh Khan for his debut, **SABYASACHI MUKHERJEE** also walked the blue carpet for the second time, in a look that was a masterpiece in cultural reclamation. A quilted ivory overcoat paired with a pearl-buttoned shirt and sculptural cummerbund exuded regal elegance. The emerald choker and marigold-plumed hat were bold symbols of postcolonial pride, blending Indian aristocracy with Black Dandyism.

6

A fishtail skirt crafted from heirloom Parsi Gara saris, bold Gara jacket and lace bralette created a dynamic blend of strength and grace. Intricate embroidery, pearls, and an imperial purple lining made the Manish Malhotra ensemble the perfect outfit for the maximalist in **NATASHA POONAWALLA**.

7

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8 **ISHA AMBANI**, a regular attendee of the Gala, embodied modern maharani glamour in a sculpted Anamika Khanna look — corseted white bodice, tailored black trousers, and a sweeping embroidered coat. Her heirloom jewels, including a 1931 Maharajah necklace and beige diamond ring, added gravitas. A pearl dragonfly clip and surreal brooches sealed the look in quiet magnificence.

8

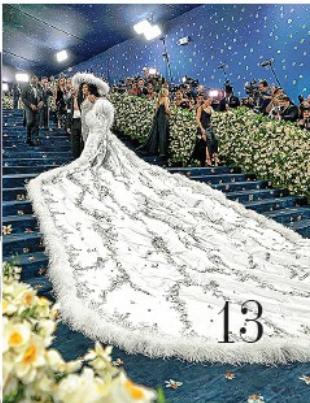
▶ FROM PAGE 9



11



12



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14



16



10

9 RIHANNA did not just announce her third baby with A\$AP Rocky, she shut down the MET Gala carpet in peak power-dresser mode. Dressed in custom Marc Jacobs, she served boss energy in a boned corset, slit wool skirt, cropped jacket and a classic shirt layered with a polka-dot tie. Known for never disappointing at the MET Gala, RiRi's sleek top hat, diamond brooches and baby bump sealed the slay.

10 KIM KARDASHIAN's black leather cowgirl look with a side of pearls and diamonds certainly made an entrance, but let's be honest, nothing will ever top that wet Mugler moment from Camp: Notes on Fashion in 2019. This year's Western-inspired ensemble was sharp, sleek and covered in diamonds, but it was a little less "wow" and a little more "well, it's Kim." Still, she managed to stand out. Just not quite like she did in 2019.



11

SABRINA CARPENTER ditched the trousers and stole the show in a custom oxblood Louis Vuitton blazer-bodysuit. Sharp, sparkly and sass-laced, the Pharrell-approved look was pure power-play — no pants, no problem. With a sun-kissed glow and cheeky charm, Sabrina served tailored drama in an OOTN that undoubtedly makes it to our best-dressed list!

12 MADONNA lit up the MET Gala — quite literally — in an ivory silk Tom Ford suit and a smouldering cigar to match. Leaning into the theme with boss-grade flair, the 66-year-old Queen of Pop gave androgyny a sultry twist, pairing high-waisted trousers with a cropped shirt, lace gloves and a knowing smirk. She was on theme, on fire, and undeniably on our best-dressed list — smoke and all.

13

DIANA ROSS didn't just return to the MET Gala after 22 years — she descended like royalty draped in sequins and sentiment. Her custom white gown, dreamed up with her son Evan and designer Ugo

Mozie, came complete with an 18-foot train embroidered

with the names of her children and grandchildren. It was part couture, part family tree, and wholly fabulous. Honestly, if legacy dressing is the new trend, everyone else might as well pack it up.



15



17

15 EMMA CHAMBERLAIN, one of the first to arrive at the 2025 MET Gala and a host this year, turned heads with her daring take on pinstripes. While many played it safe, Emma opted for a backless pinstripe suit dress with a train, pairing it with sheer gloves... both fashion-forward and far from boring.

16

CUSTOM CREAM LOUIS VUITTON was the star of **ZENDAYA**'s look, a perfect example of sleek tailoring with no pinstripes in sight — thank God! The suit was paired with a matching hat and she flaunted red nails and an engagement ring that stole the show.

17

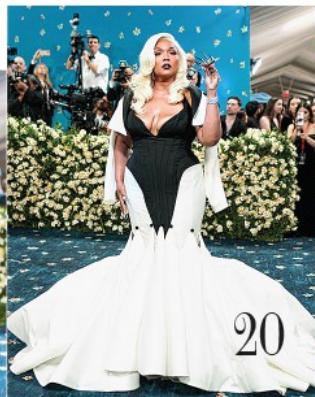
MONOGRAMMED LV, burgundy silk bowtie, checkerboard shorts — **DOECHII** stunned 2025 MET Gala. The cigar in hand? Pure confidence. She waltzed onto the blue carpet with Tiffany jewellery and a natural Afro, nailing the theme. Definitely one of the best-dressed of the evening!

FASHION

t2



18



20



21

18 **GIGI HADID** brought chic to the MET Gala carpet in a custom golden Miu Miu gown, honouring Zelda Wynn Valdes and the theme. Styled by Gabriella Karefa-Johnson, she worked a sleek Victory Roll and silver accessories like a Goddess. No sign of "her man" Bradley Cooper, but she did mention him on the blue carpet. A little MET Gala tease never hurt!

19 Featuring a velvet ocelot-print bustier and exaggerated shoulder pads, **DOJA CAT** commanded attention in a Marc Jacobs pinstriped bodysuit. The bold, '80s-inspired look, paired with black tights and Kiki boots, was a striking mix of sharp lines and fluidity, underscored by a dramatic wool jacket top. Going pantless was definitely trending on the blue carpet.

20 **LIZZO** arrived with platinum blonde hair and a custom Christian Siriano gown that screamed 'drama'. A cream and black corset paired with a cropped jacket and a diamond-studded floating skirt had everyone turning heads.



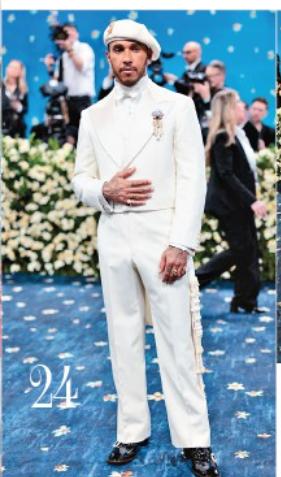
22



21 We love a Manish Malhotra moment on the MET Gala carpet! **COCO JONES** served up elegance in a cream and white embroidered masterpiece, complete with a dramatic train and shirrless chic beneath the sharp-lapelled coat. With a dazzling diamond necklace, Jimmy Choo heels, a looongoing braid and floral inspiration cascading down her look, she was a vision for sure.

22 Very few nailed the theme like co-host **TEYANA TAYLOR**. In custom Ruth E. Carter and Marc Jacobs, she shut it down in oxblood stripes, a feathered fedora, red cane, wallet chains, gloves, and a durag with a train featuring the text "Harlem Rose". Sharp tailoring? Check. Swagger? Off the charts. Best dressed of the night — no contest.

23 **CARDI B**'s green velvet Burberry suit had the Internet jokingly comparing her to seaweed, but she pulled it off with style. The Burberry look, complete with a daring back cutout, plunging neckline and Afro hair, showcased her fearless fashion flair.



24



28

24 He not just owned the racetrack! Formula One legend **LEWIS HAMILTON** dropped jaws on the MET steps. In custom Grace Wales Bonner — silk tailcoat, cowrie sash, vintage jewels — he served culture, couture, and co-chair realness. Fastest on four wheels and best dressed? By a mile!



25

25 **BAD BUNNY** was back at the MET — and hotter than a Caribbean summer. In a brown Prada suit, glitzy gloves and a pava hat worthy of a revolution, he repped Puerto Rico with flair, sparkle and just the right amount of chaos. Benito, bendito... you've still got it.



26

26 **COLMAN DOMINGO** didn't just co-chair the 2025 MET Gala — he pulled off the most elegant costume change of the night. Draped in a regal cobalt Valentino cape paying homage to André Leon Talley, the actor hit the carpet looking every bit the fashion statesman. But plot twist! Off came the cape to reveal a razor-sharp monochrome blazer, polka-dot scarf, pinstripes and Boucheron bling. A lesson in dandy drama? Without a doubt.



27

27 **JENNIE**, the K-pop icon, showed up in a stunning white strapless Chanel dress. With pearl details, a split hem and a chic two-tone boater hat, she brought major Audrey Hepburn vibes. She embodied old Hollywood glam. Black dandyism? Not so sure.

28 As co-chair of the 2025 MET Gala, **A\$AP ROCKY** brought Harlem to the red carpet in a self-designed AWGE parka — double-breasted, dandy, and very "dad-on-duty chic." Inspired by Marmot jackets from his youth, it came tailored like a tux and trimmed with velcro (because why not!?) He styled it with satin boxers, Louboutins and Bulgari bling.

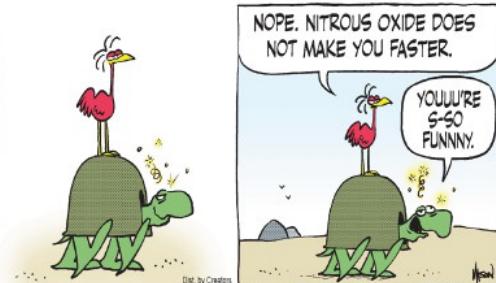
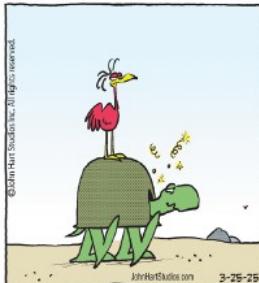
29 MET debutante **CHAPPELL ROAN** didn't follow the theme — she was the theme. Draped in glittery pink and gold with matching tear tracks and drag flair, Roan turned the MET Gala into her own Pink Pony Club. Subtle? Never heard of that!

Sanjali Brahma

Pictures: Reuters and Getty Images

18

B.C. by Johnny Hart



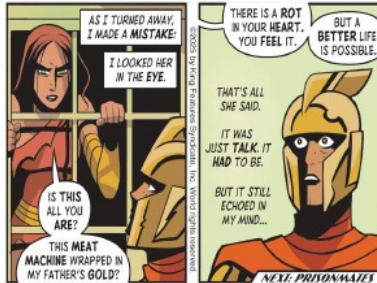
Peanuts by Charles Schulz



The Wizard of Id by Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



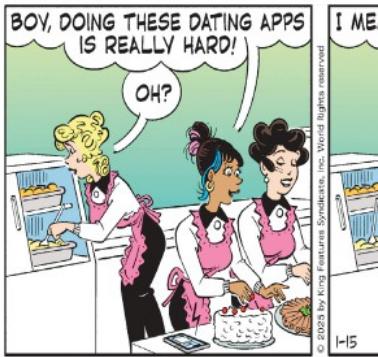
Flash Gordon by Dan Schkade



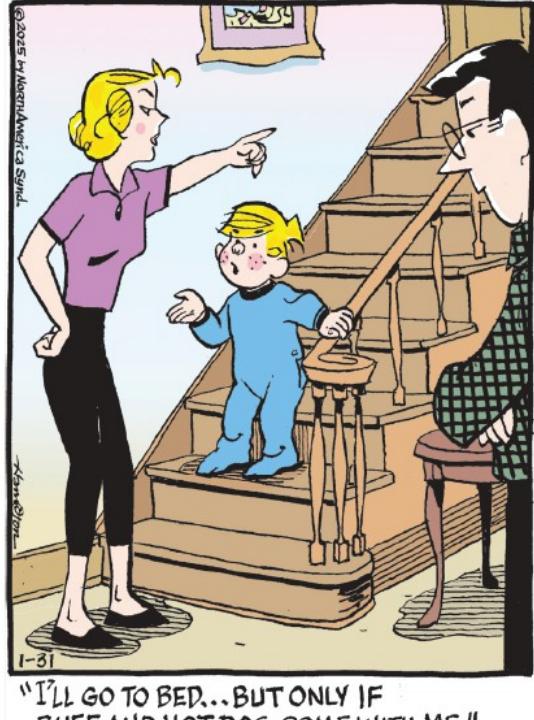
Hagar the Horrible by Chris Browne



Blondie by Dean Young

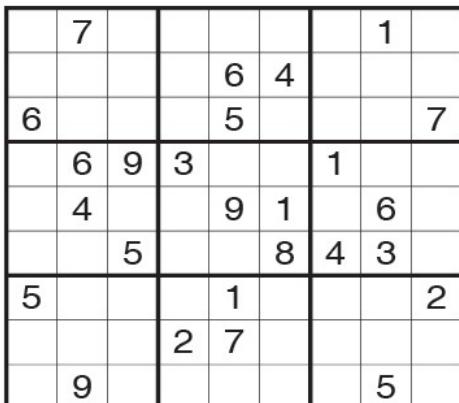


Dennis the Menace



Doonesbury Classics by Garry Trudeau



PUZZLE**11642****SUDOKU MODERATE**

Fill in the 9x9 square grid with the numbers one to nine. The numbers should be arranged in such a way that each row, column and mini-grid contains one of each number. Solution to Sudoku 11640 is on the right

9	4	8	2	3	7	1	6	5
6	3	1	9	5	4	2	8	7
2	5	7	8	1	6	9	3	4
7	9	3	4	2	5	6	1	8
8	6	5	1	9	3	4	7	2
1	2	4	7	6	8	3	5	9
3	8	2	6	7	9	5	4	1
4	1	6	5	8	2	7	9	3
5	7	9	3	4	1	8	2	6

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Jumble

David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

JUMBLE

THAT SCRABBLED WORD GAME

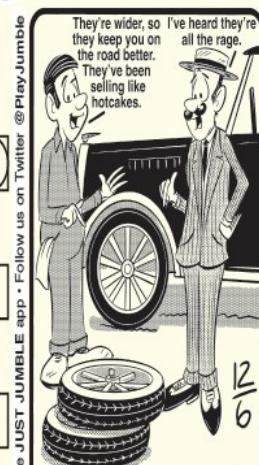
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

VRBAO

NICIG

TALCET

CAEYNG



AFTER INFLATABLE TIRES WERE INTRODUCED, IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THEM TO ...

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

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(Answers tomorrow)

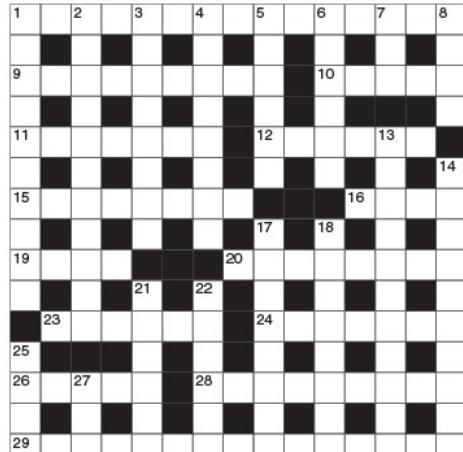
Yesterday's Jumbles: MIDST HOBBY DRAGON UNLIKE
Answer: After making a joke about his wife's weight gain, he'd need to — LIGHTEN THE MOOD

11643**SUDOKU DIABOLICAL**

Fill in the 9x9 square grid with the numbers one to nine. The numbers should be arranged in such a way that each row, column and mini-grid contains one of each number. Solution to Sudoku 11641 is on the right

9	4	1	5	3	8	2	6	7
3	7	2	4	6	1	8	5	9
8	5	6	2	7	9	1	3	4
4	2	3	9	5	6	7	1	8
6	8	5	7	1	2	9	4	3
7	1	9	8	4	3	5	2	6
5	6	8	3	2	7	4	9	1
1	9	4	6	8	5	3	7	2
2	3	7	1	9	4	6	8	5

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14678**CRYPTIC CROSSWORD****ACROSS**

- 1 On the rocks, I can drag sand to son's bucket (4,4,3,4)
- 9 Watch hourglass for cheats (3-6)
- 10 For speech, remained sober (5)
- 11 Short City fraud extremely idiotic (7)
- 12 What disturbed cuckoo in Middle Wallop? (6)
- 15 Spielberg initially accompanying shoot inspired by The Birds (8)
- 16 Sat by me regularly? It's irritating (4)
- 19 American with a year on holiday (4)
- 20 German and Irish advanced in submarine (8)
- 23 Left defeated (6)
- 24 51 feet behind carriage, emergency transport (7)
- 26 Play for entertainment (5)
- 28 Team's creative linchpin may sparkle in action with seconds to go (9)

Yesterday's solution

- DOGS BODY WICKED
- E L U R O B N L E CHARACTISTICS
- E D V T A T M E NAIVETY COASTER
- T O R E N T PLAYBALL TRUCE
- C U P E N D OASIS PATIENCE
- N U E X H I TRUMPET CAPTAIN
- E S P I H L N T SLIPOFHTETONGUE
- T N R E A D E N SIGHTS SPLENDID

By arrangement with The Daily Telegraph

14330**QUICK CROSSWORD****ACROSS**

- 1 Odd; drink (3)
- 3 Male (3)
- 5 Money owing (4)
- 7 Ancient Peruvians (5)
- 8 Robust (6)
- 10 Vortex (4)
- 11 Overdone masculinity (8)
- 13 Opportune (6)
- 14 Expert (6)
- 17 Nightdress (8)
- 19 Stupor (4)
- 21 Frolic (6)
- 22 Bright blue (5)
- 23 Elapse (4)
- 24 Deep container (3)
- 25 Request (3)
- 1 Imitation gem (10)
- 2 Road surface (7)
- 3 The majority (4)
- 4 Bahamas capital; saunas (anag) (6)
- 5 Ring-shaped cake (8)
- 6 Portends (5)
- 9 Traffic jam (10)
- 12 Chicago's state (8)
- 15 Stoker novel (7)
- 16 Group of seven (6)
- 18 African republic (5)
- 20 Insult (4)

Yesterday's solution

Across: 1 New; 3 Say; 5 Gents; 8 Thief; 9 Leaving; 10 Data; 11 Movement; 13 Annual; 14 Buried; 17 Subjects; 19 Clap; 22 Rooster; 23 Sleep; 24 Aimed; 25 Sad; 26 Spy.
Down: 1 Noted; 2 Written; 3 Sofa; 4 Yellow; 5 Grateful; 6 Noise; 7 Sighted; 12 Talented; 13 Austria; 15 Illness; 16 Stores; 18 Bloom; 20 Puppy; 21 Used.

KAFTANS, COTTONS, AND QUIET POWER!



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(Answers tomorrow)



Beauty enthusiasts from across the city browsed shelves, swatched shades on their hands, and exchanged favourites as Alok Sharma, YSL India's education manager, conducted two live masterclasses. His top tip was "start your foundation from the centre of the face and blend outwards."



Jyotee Khatian stopped by to celebrate the launch of YSL's new lipstick line. "I love it! I'm wearing it right now and can't wait to wear more of it," said the designer, her fresh Nykaa haul, her arm candy!



Neha Gandhi Binrajka was smart in a crisp black-and-white look and a Prada bag.



Fashion designer Deepika Agarwal stood out in a vivid blue dress and statement red loafers. "I'm loving being at the event today at Nykaa for the YSL launch. It's as vibrant as the hostess (Davina) herself," she said. "I picked up the shade Blush Connection from the collection, and I love it!"

Nikita Bhalla was all smiles as she posed with her pick of the day — YSL perfume!

YSL'S NEW RANGE OF LIPSTICK LAUNCHED AT NYKAA LUXE ON PARK STREET. t2 WAS THERE

Ten bold shades by Yves Saint Laurent hit the shelves of Nykaa Luxe, Park Street, on May 2. The launch which saw The Inks line of lipsticks debut in Calcutta, was hosted by fashionista Davina Thacker and Prerna Jalan. A bunch of chic Calcuttans came by to swatch, sit, and shop. t2 dropped by.



Hosts Davina Thacker and Prerna Jalan at the YSL x Nykaa event. Davina, in a vibrant printed co-ord set, and Prerna in sculptural black with gold accents, were dressed for the event. "YSL is one of my favourite brands. I love their bags, lipsticks, everything. This new launch is fierce and bold, just like me," smiled Davina. Prerna loved its "high-quality payoff and wearable shades."



Simran Kaur Walia (right), praised the long-stay matte and glossy options while Jyoti Luthra enjoyed the workshop. "I enjoyed the session on make-up tips and also meeting so many women and chit-chatting with them!" said Jyoti.



We loved Gitanjali Agarwal's eclectic street style at the event. Her picks from the brand? Lip shades and perfumes!



Khushboo Chokhani checked out the new YSL Inks at Nykaa Luxe and "loved how it didn't dry the lips".

Riddhima Chawla brought an extra dose of warmth with her adorable son by her side, who lit up the room with his wide-eyed smile. "It was a shopping date with my four-year-old! Since Mother's Day is around the corner, he wanted me to buy myself a gift, and what's better than the YSL Inks... fab, smooth!" she shared.

"I am a very lipstick person, so I was keen on checking this range from YSL, who are known for their beauty products, and I must say I wasn't disappointed," said Nikita Agarwal.

Anoushka Kundu (2 intern)
Pictures: Pabitra Das

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SUNDAY OPEN

Shah Rukh Khan in *Jawan*

Among the films featuring double roles in recent times, my favourite is the Sauvik Kundu-directed science-fiction Bengali action-comedy *Boomerang*. Jeet as a scientist, Dr. Samar Sen and the andro-humanoid clone robot Amar, and Rukmini Maitra as Samar's wife Isha Sen and a robot Nisha, played their respective double roles with much conviction and elan. (*Which is your favourite film/series featuring a double role in recent times?.. October 29*)

Kajal Chatterjee

Charlie Chaplin made an audacious doppelganger film that served as a condemnation of fascism and the horrific Nazi German regime. Chaplin plays both lead roles, of a dictator who rises to power and of the Jewish barber. The result is a terrifically funny comedy of errors but one with blazingly furious messaging about the importance of standing against injustice. In the dual role, Chaplin does some of his best work, particularly in a poignant ending monologue that proved he was an acting icon beyond

the era of silent films.

Srijan Mukherjee

Shah Rukh Khan's blockbuster *Jawan* stands out as my favourite film featuring a double role in recent times. This intensely engrossing action thriller unleashes a fantastic blend of electrifying excitement and thought-provoking exploration of pressing issues with sensitivity and sensibility. Shah Rukh Khan as the protagonist Vikram Rathore and his father Azad Rathore meticulously embodied the striking traits of his well-written characters, emphasising on core values such as compassion, empathy and awareness with unwavering conviction.

As soldiers, they displayed unyielding determination, advocating tirelessly for the marginalised and the wronged. They boldly challenged our corrupt system with hard-hitting queries, exposing its deep-rooted injustices and instilling a spirit of enquiry among the audience. While Shah Rukh illuminated the screen with his magnetic charm, his leading ladies remarkably matched his verve, augmenting the ensemble performance to perfection. Every element, ranging from witty one-liners to its impactful finale, was adeptly crafted, and culminated in an intellectually stimulating cinematic experience.

Special shout-out to director Atlee and music composer Anirudh Ravichander for delivering a chart-

topping music album.

Aayman Anwar Ali

There are a few movies which I like most but among them I preferred *Gemini Man* which I saw today. This was a very entertaining movie and had me glued from start to finish. Will Smith as the assassin Henry Brogan did an amazing job. The younger Will threw me off a little at first because we have been watching his older self for so long, but it was awesome. The computer-generated version took a few scenes to get used to but it was still amazing. Not sure why the critics gave it such a poor review. Great family movie, definitely would watch it again. The action scenes are captivating and watching Will pursue himself was something I never thought I'd wanted to see. Definitely would recommend it to those who like fast-paced action movies.

Debojit Swarnaker

My favourite film featuring a double role in recent times, no doubt, is the intriguing and gripping Netflix mystery-thriller *Do Patti*, whose story revolves around twin sisters named Saumya and Shalini. Kriti Sanon played the dual role and delivered a power-packed, emotionally-charged and captivating performance. She shone in both roles and truly stole the limelight. The way the Bolly actress portrayed the characters of the two sisters, who are poles apart in personality, was just fantastic and praiseworthy.

Sourish Misra

YOUR FAVOURITE FILM BASED ON INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE

My favourite film set in 1947 is Ritwik Ghatak's classic titled *Meghe Dhaka Tara*. When the rest of India was joyfully celebrating the Independence of the country, millions of Bengalis (as well as Punjabis) suddenly found themselves 'alien' in the land owned by their ancestors for generations. Their world turned upside down with many of their family members ruthlessly murdered by communal elements. The ones who were lucky to escape the butchery fled their land and managed to reach and barely survive in what is now known as West Bengal. Bereft of shelter, resources and livelihood, the plight of these refugees was heartbreaking.

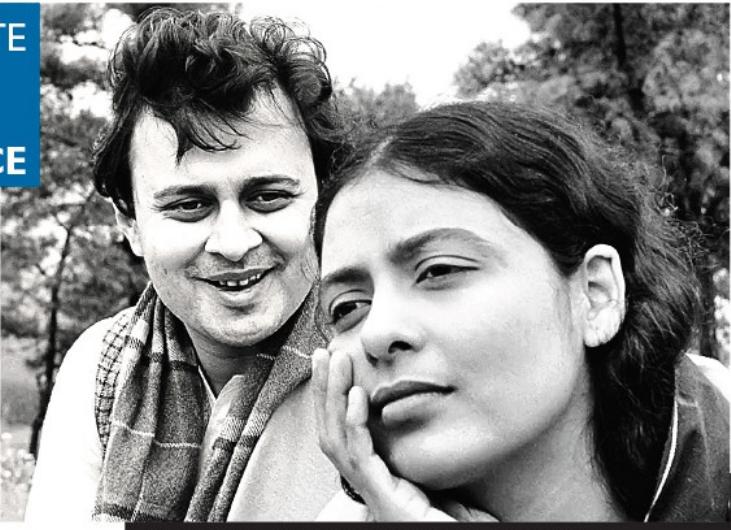
Meghe Dhaka Tara focuses on one such unfortunate family whose members had to sacrifice everything so that India could turn independent. The daily toll, struggle and sacrifice of the young refugee girl Nita (Supriya Choudhury) to survive

against all odds and somehow sustain herself and her larger family with dignity, was heartrending. Her sincerity and honesty through all her troubles made the film all the more poignant. It also provided a lesson of sorts on the kind of hatred and horror that communalism can unleash on humanity. (*Which is your favourite film/series set in 1947?.. November 8*)

Kajal Chatterjee

Year 1947 is an unforgettable watershed for each and every Indian. After a long struggle, the country was finally liberated from British rule. And from this perspective I would like to talk about a film named *Gandhi*, starring Ben Kingsley in the titular role.

The film offers an authentic

Anil Chatterjee and Supriya Choudhury in *Meghe Dhaka Tara*

representation of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. At the 55th Academy Awards in 1983, this movie won eight Oscar awards from 11 nominations, with multiple nominations in many other award ceremonies held that year. Watching *Gandhi*, I felt proud to be an Indian and have someone of his stature as my fellow countryman. A must-watch

for today's generation who have little knowledge of the stories of India's Independence struggle.

Mahatma Gandhi is depicted in the film as a great modern pantheistic prophet, but the camera does not shy away from revealing moments of possible colossal vanity that only paint him as human, just like the rest of us.

Debojit Swarnaker

My favourite film set in 1947 is Deepa Mehta's 1998 movie *Earth*. The masterpiece was based on a novel named *Cracking India*, written by Bapsi Sidhwa. Starring Aamir Khan, Rahul Khanna, Nandita Das and Shabana Azmi, this fine period drama on friendship, love and heartbreak during the Partition of India in 1947 was our country's entry for the 1999 Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film. It received the top honour that year at the Asian Film Festival.

What I like the most about this film is the way the ace film-maker gave the Partition theme a human touch in its storyline. Aamir, Rahul and Nandita were splendid, their characterisations so real and so memorable. All three delivered fantastic performances. I also love the film's songs. The tracks, which are composed by legendary music director A.R. Rahman and written by another legend Javed Akhtar, were very melodious. My fave number from the movie is *Rut aa gayee re*.

Sourish Misra